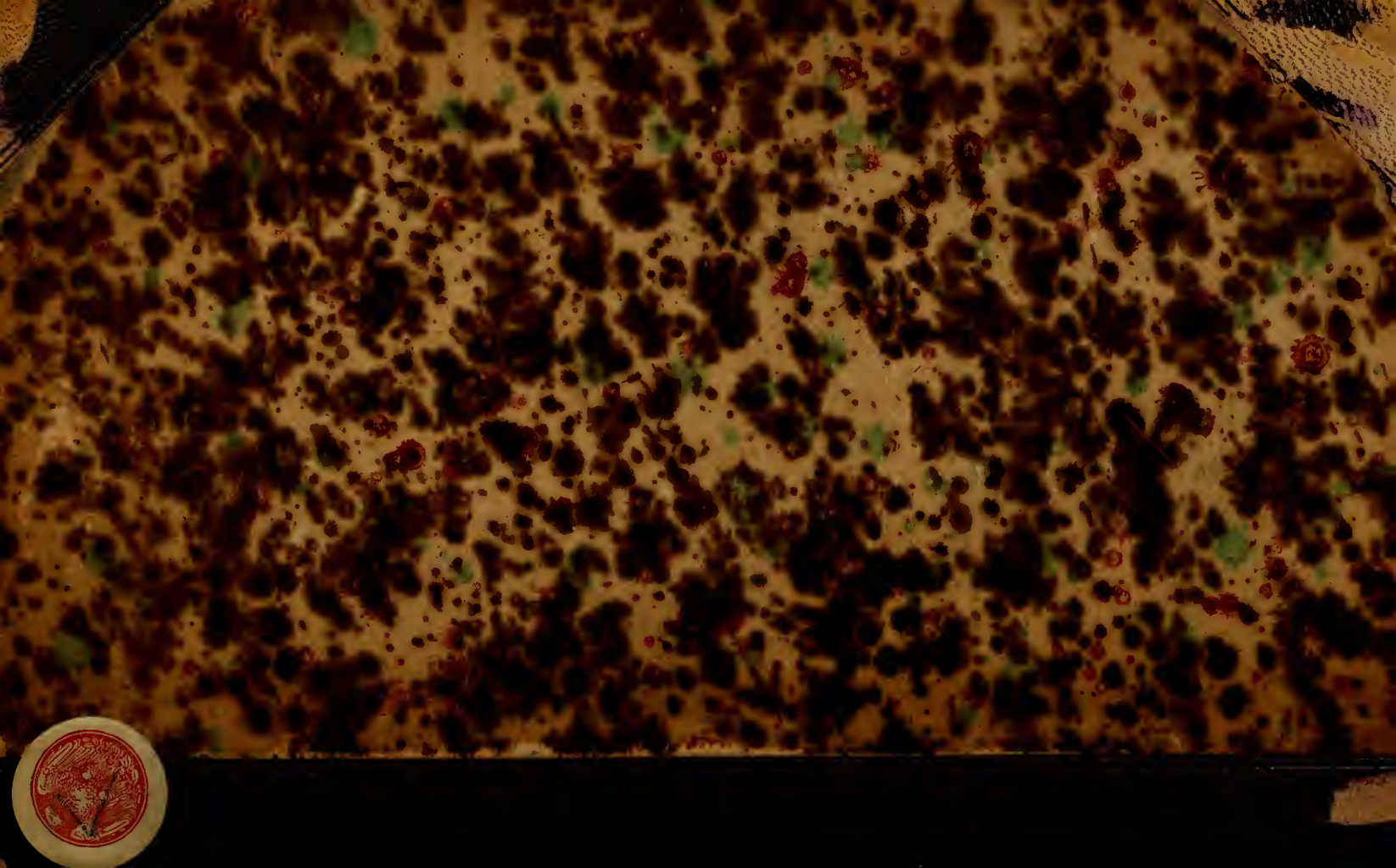

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# My Record in Rebeldom,

AS WRITTEN BY

## FRIEND AND FOE.

*Comprising the Official Charges and Evidence before the Military Commission in Washington, Brig. Gen'l J. C. Caldwell, Pres't, together with the Report and Finding of the Court.*

Printed for Private Circulation and Future Reference,

—BY—

JAMES M. SANDERSON,

LATE LIEUTENANT COLONEL, ADDITIONAL AIDE-DE-CAMP, AND CHIEF COMMISSARY OF SUBSISTENCE OF THE FIRST ARMY CORPS.

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TO MY ENEMIES
AND MY LUKE-WARM FRIENDS,
I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

*To the First,*
*acknowledging my indebtedness.*

*To the Last,*
*that I may prove how little I owe them.*

*The Former,*
*by their persistence in falsehood, and industry in wrong doing, have extorted my special wonder.*

*The Latter,*
*by their unbecoming reticence and ungenerous silence, are entitled to my undisguised contempt.*

*To the One,*
*I tender my thanks for the substantial triumph they have afforded me.*

*To the Other,*
*my regrets that they have proven false to themselves.*

*And to Both,*
*my congratulations that they have failed alike in their active and passive injustice, in their positive and negative wrong.*

*Brooklyn, November, 1865.*

# INTRODUCTION.

After enduring, for nearly eight months, the horrors of a Southern prison, I found myself, almost on the very morning of my enfranchisement, (with a heart overflowing with joy, and sincerely thankful to that Providence which had so mercifully protected me from the ills and dangers of my incarceration,) suddenly stripped of my happiness, and my liberty again restricted by the action of my own Government—which, for three years, I had manfully striven to uphold. On the very point of returning to my family, I was arrested by an order of the Secretary of War, and directed to confine myself to the limits of Willard's hotel. Conscious of no crime, I cheerfully yielded to the orders of my superior officer—confidently believing that a brief period would place me in possession of the allegations against me, to which I had little doubt of making a satisfactory reply. The fact of my arrest being announced in the public journals, my friends, both military and civil, hastened to express their confidence in my honor, by personal visits. Among them was one who, more conversant with military usage than myself, intimated that the course pursued in my case was unusual and severe. Outraged at this information, I immediately called on my former commander and always friend—James S. Wadsworth, then temporarily stopping at the hotel. Confiding to him my troubles, he at once sought the Secretary of War, and, after briefly stating my services and character, asked that I should be treated in a manner commensurate with my deserts. Strongly prejudiced against me by the slanders of my enemies, this gentleman not

only refused his request, but threatened to send me to Fortress Monroe—there to remain for the balance of the war. Believing him in earnest, my gallant defender immediately posted off to the proposed place of imprisonment, for the purpose of seeing General Butler, my future custodian, and interesting him in my behalf. During his absence, however, I deemed it proper to address the following to the War Office :—

"*Willards' Hotel*, Sunday Eve'g,
MARCH 13, 1864.

"Hon. E. M. STANTON,
"*Secretary of War*—

"SIR : After a confinement of seven months, in the most horrid and loathsome prison known to modern times, I find myself, on my return to my own lines, the victim of a most cruel, cowardly, and infamous accusation, emanating solely from personal malevolence and petty jealousy. Arrested on the very threshold of my happiness, I learn that I have been released from one prison only to be immured in another.

"The charges against me, let them proceed from whom they may, are of such a character as to require the most searching investigation ; and my purport, in thus addressing you, is to say that, whilst courting—nay, demanding—the most thorough scrutiny, and placing myself unreservedly and uncomplainingly at the disposition of my government, I would most respectfully submit that, two years and a half service in the field—facing the enemy—entitles me to a belief in my innocence, and the treatment due thereto, until the impartial verdict of a military tribunal may decide otherwise.

"Very respectfully,
"Your obed't servant,
"JAMES M. SANDERSON,
"*Lt. Col. C. S. V.*"

After a delay of forty-eight hours, I was waited upon by Capt. W. T. Hartz, A. A. G. to Col. Hoffman, Commissary General of Prisoners, who served upon me the following order :—

"*Office of the Comm'y Gen. of Prisoners,*
WASHINGTON, D. C., March 15, 1864.

"Lt. Col. J. M. SANDERSON,
"*Comm'y Sub. U. S. V.*,
Washington, D. C.—

"COLONEL: By authority of the Secretary of War, you are hereby relieved from your arrest, and permitted to return to your home, on condition that you give your parole of honor not to leave there without authority; and that you will be prepared to meet at any time or place *any charges that* MAY *be preferred against you* by any officer who was a prisoner of war with you in Richmond.

"Very respectfully, &c.,
"W. HOFFMAN, Col. Third Inf'y,
"*Comm'y Gen. of Prisoners.*"

Readily accepting this condition, I signed the parole, and immediately started for home. On reaching New-York, greatly to my amusement and the astonishment of my friends, I learned through the newspapers that I was then on my way to Fort Warren. In order to correct this misstatement, I published the following card, addressed to the different editors :—

"*Pierrepont House*, BROOKLYN,
MARCH 18, 1864.

"SIR: In order to relieve the minds of those who have a real interest in my welfare, allow me to say that I have been released from arrest; and am *not* on my way to Fort Warren or any other prison.

"As regards the charges brought against me, my friends, by their generous advocacy, have shown that they need no denial thereof; but, to the public at large, I would simply state that they never had any foundation save in the base imagination of one who, having proven himself recreant to his country and his God, is eminently capable of any falsehood calculated to direct attention from his own shortcomings.

"Although a momentary sufferer by the action of the military authorities, I am, nevertheless, proud to serve a government which thus shows its determination to watch with jealous eye the conduct of its officers, wherever they may be; and shall have every cause of complaint removed if I am afforded

an early opportunity of explaining my whole conduct as an officer and a gentleman while in the hands of the enemy.

"Very respectfully, &c.,

"JAS. M. SANDERSON,

"*Lt. Col. & C. S. V.*"

Early in May, the Government officially promulgated the exchange of all prisoners, to the 7th of that month. Having periodically advised the Department to which I belonged (the *Subsistence*) of my position and whereabouts, I nevertheless considered it my duty to address the following communication to the Adjutant General's office :—

"*Pierrepont House*, BROOKLYN,
MAY 16, 1864.

"Col. E. D. TOWNSEND, A. A. G.,
"*War Department*,
"Washington, D. C.—

"COLONEL : Informed through the daily papers of this date that an Exchange has been declared of all prisoners paroled prior to May 7th, I hasten to lay before you the copy of an order which condemns me to remain here indefinitely, awaiting confirmation of charges which have no foundation save in the base imagination of a cowardly slanderer.

"You will perceive by the wording of that order that I am required to remain at my home, and hold myself 'prepared to meet, at any time or place, any charges that *may* be preferred against me by any officer who was a prisoner of war with me in Richmond.' Two months have now elapsed, and the bitterest of my enemies are at this moment within the control of the Government ; and as none of *them* have yet dared to add perjury to their other crimes, the probabilities are that the war will be finished before I can establish my innocence or prove by my future conduct the utter falsity of their insinuations.

"Engaged in this contest as a matter of religion, and proud of the commission I have the honor to hold, I do not desire to remain in the rear during these stirring times, or retain that commission as a sinecure as long as there is anything to be done suited to my capacity or my strength ; and I, therefore, most respectfully but earnestly request that I may be, at the earliest practicable moment, either trusted or tried—feeling

fully conscious of my ability to prove by either test my loyalty to my Government, and my devotion to the cause of unity and Freedom.

"Very respectfully, &c.,
"JAS. M. SANDERSON,
*Lt. Col. & C. S. V.*

To this no response was given until the 18th June following, when I saw in the *Army and Navy Journal* the announcement of my *dismissal.* Stunned and humiliated for the moment by this most summary and unjust proceeding, I again addressed Col. Townsend, as follows :

"82 *Wall St.*, NEW-YORK, }
JUNE 18, 1864. }

"Col. E. D. TOWNSEND, A. A. G.,
"Washington, D. C.—

"COLONEL : I have the honor to state that, in the *Army and Navy Journal* of this date, I find the following announcement :—

"'*Dismissals, for the week ending June* 11, 1864.—Lieut. Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON, Captain Commissary Subsistence, U. S. Vols. : to date June 6, 1864.'

"My object in addressing you is, to inquire if this announcement is official ; and, if so, whether I have not the right *to know the charges* on which this action of my Government is based ?

"I would also respectfully call your attention to the fact that I hold a commission as Major and additional Aid-de-Camp dated July 15, 1862 ; and would ask if that commission is embraced in the order dismissing me ? Awaiting your answer,

"I am, very respectfully, &c.,
"J. M. SANDERSON,
"*Lt. Col. & C. S. V.*"

After another delay of ten days, a printed order reached me, containing the following :—

*War Dep't, Adj't Gen'l's Office,*
WASHINGTON, June 23, 1864.

*Special Orders,*
No. 217.

[EXTRACT.]

"7.—Paragraph 32, of Special Orders No. 201, from this Office, dated June 8, 1864, dismissing Lieut. Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON, Captain and Commissary of Subsistence, U. S. Vols., is hereby amended, to read as follows :—

"'By direction of the President, Lieut. Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON, Major, Additional Aid-de-Camp, and Captain Commismissary of Subsistence, U. S. Vols., is hereby dismissed the service of the United States : to take effect from June 6, 1864.'

"By order of the Secretary of War,
"E. D. TOWNSEND,
"*Ass't Adj't Gen'l.*"

[OFFICIAL,]
(Signed) "E. D. TOWNSEND,
"*Ass't Adj't Gen'l.*

"To Mr. JAMES M. SANDERSON,
"*No.* 82 *Wall St.*,
"New-York City."

This, although conclusive, was neither satisfactory nor responsive. I determined, therefore, to visit Washington, and ascertain, if possible, the causes of this unmerited disgrace. On my arrival, I called at the office of the Adjutant General, where, after several applications, I received a flat refusal to my request to be furnished with a copy of the charges against me—being referred to a printed order, requiring all such demands to be made direct to the Secretary of War. In obedience to this, I immediately wrote to Mr. Stanton a communication—reciting, in brief, my services, my experiences, and my desires. After a reasonable delay, receiving no reply, I determined to refer the matter to his Excellency, the President of the United States ; and, having armed myself with a letter of introduction from the Hon. H. B. Anthony, Senator

from Rhode Island, (a copy of which I append,) I called at the White House :—

"*Senate Chamber*,
July 2, 1864.

"To the President of the United States—

"Sir : Lt. Col. James M. Sanderson informs me that he has been summarily dismissed the service, without a trial and without a knowledge of the charges against him.

"I have long known Col. Sanderson—and have regarded him as a man of high honor, of unquestionable loyalty, and as having rendered valuable service. I cannot believe, in the absence of evidence, that he has been guilty of any offence, deserving of so harsh punishment ; and I hope he will be allowed an opportunity to answer charges against him.

"I am confident that your sense of justice will recognize the reasonableness of this request, *which is all he asks*. The late Gen. Wadsworth, I know, had a high opinion of Col. Sanderson, and I have heard him express it in emphatic terms.

"Very respectfully,
"Your obed't serv't,
(Signed) "H. B. ANTHONY."

Three days I danced attendance in the waiting-hall of the Presidential mansion ; but, owing to various circumstances, without obtaining access to His Excellency. Thinking the letter might prove an "open sesame," I sent that in with my card ; but, just at that moment, information being brought of the unexpected arrival of Gen. Early, C. S. A., I was obliged to await the movements of this unwelcome visitor—even volunteering to assist in his reception. My services not being needed, and the whole Government being too much occupied in attending to the subject matter in hand, I concluded, by advice of friends, to return home and "bide my time." In the meanwhile, however, I deemed it my duty to keep myself fresh in the memory of the Honorable Secretary of War, by repeating my request for information and trial regularly every month. I also addressed a communication to the Hon. C. A. Dana, Assist't Secretary of War, with whom I had a personal

acquaintance of years; but from neither of these gentlemen could I obtain any reply.

One day, in October, walking through Broadway, I accidentally encountered my friend, Senator Anthony, who informed me that he was the recipient of a letter from the War Department, referring to my matters. This, on his return home, he sent me—and was as follows :—

"*War Department,*
SEPT. 1864.

"Hon. H. B. ANTHONY,
"*Senate Chamber—*

"SIR: I am directed by the Secretary of War to acknowledge receipt of your communication to the President of the United States—asking that JAMES M. SANDERSON, late Lt. Col. and Commissary Subsistence *may be permitted to be heard in his own defence:* and to inform you that the application *has been denied* by the President.

"Very respectfully,
"JAMES A. HARDIE.
"*Col., &c.*"

Undismayed by this refusal, I again visited Washington, and after several days delay, at length succeeded in obtaining an interview with the President, to whom I recited my case in as few words as possible, and showed him the letter sent to Mr. Anthony. Endorsing it to the Judge-Advocate-General, he requested me to call again. This, after an interview with Judge Holt, I did, and was again referred to him with the promise that if I could get the Judge to advise my being sent before a Military Commission, *in writing*, it should be done. On stating this to Judge Holt, he positively refused to accede to it, on the ground that "a report had already been made to the President in this case, in which the evident tendency was to such a reference, and the President would so find it if he would take the trouble to read it. This was the extent of his duty, and he would not go further. It was neither proper nor respectful for him to dictate to the President what course he should pursue," and to all my intreaties he was deaf and unmoved. I again sought the President, and luckily obtained

an interview without difficulty. On learning, however, the opinion of the Judge-Advocate-General, he curtly informed me that he could do nothing for me ; but finally, after an interview of half an hour, he reluctantly consented, and wrote an order sending me before the Military Commission, then in session at Washington. Obtaining from the Secretary of War his immediate approval, I waited upon the Court thus selected, and found it composed of Brigadier-General John C. Caldwell, U. S. Vols., President, and Lieutenant-Colonel G. W. Patten, U. S. A. (subsequently relieved by Colonel G. A. H. Blake, 1st Cavalry,) his associate, and Captain G. H. Caldwell, Recorder. By these gentlemen I was most courteously received, and most patiently heard, and as soon as they were furnished with the papers in the case, they placed them at my disposal. Then, for the first time, was I made acquainted with the nature of the charges, and the names of my accusers, and I have yet to decide which caused me the greater astonishment. To be blackened by Streight, to be calumniated by Atwood, was bad enough, yet could be borne; but to be dishonored at the fiat of Neal Dow, was a degradation for which I was quite unprepared.

Asking from the Commission some authority, whereby to enforce evidence from unwilling witnesses, I was astonished to find no such power was vested in them ; in fact, all they could do was to hear such testimony as I could personally obtain, or my friends voluntarily furnish.

There being no limit assigned to the time for collecting my testimony, I returned to my home, and immediately set myself to work. Taking the statements of Neal Dow and Corporal Taylor as a basis, and adding thereto all the slanders and calumnious reports that had come to my ears, I addressed to such officers as I could recollect or hear of from others, a series of questions, the replies to which I requested them to embody in form of a consecutive narrative, made *on honor*, to be returned to me at their earliest convenience. In selecting these parties, I was entirely uninfluenced by fear or favor. Every man capable, in my opinion, of telling the truth was addressed; and, as will be seen, some of them did not hesitate to state that

they had been my enemies, and did not agree with me in sentiment or opinion, during our imprisonment. In framing my questions I was obliged to confine myself, in most cases, to such matters as I had reason to think came within the immediate cognizance of the party addressed, and in every case I was forced to rely upon my remembrance of their associations and surroundings; for, whilst I feared nothing that any one would truthfully state, of his own knowledge, as to my personal conduct, I was obliged to be cautious in drawing out opinions which might be construed unfavorably, owing to the great difficulty of arriving at the true character of the circumstances on which these opinions were formed. Face to face with a witness, it is not a difficult task to compel him to qualify his statements, even though he be most anxious to injure you; but men do not always care to unbosom their secret reasons for hostility or bias, unless compelled under the sanctity of an oath, before two or more calm, unprejudiced, and scrutinizing judges. Even Neal Dow would have paused before enunciating many of the charges, so cheerfully narrated in his letter, and Corporal Taylor would have slunk like a whipped dog, before reciting his own shame. Could I have been permitted to put all or any of my bitterest foes, Dow, Streight, Atwood, or Taylor, on the stand, and subject them to the ordeal of a cross-examination, I would not have required the evidence of a single friend to exonerate me from any of the charges alleged, unless they had deliberately committed perjury. And no greater triumph could have been afforded me than the satisfaction of drawing from Dow a history of his operations in Louisiana; a minute account of *that* celebrated wound received (where?) and a list of the contents of *those two large heavy trunks* brought from Libby—to say nothing of the advantage to military science to be derived from the recital of Streight's raid into Georgia: how he fought Forrest first, and then forced him to buy his horses before surrendering; with his peculiar views on discipline, and his experience in mounting infantry. But lacking the means to obtain these ends, truth and strategy must suffer, unless this pure philanthropist, and doughty hero, moved to voluntary compliance, enlighten an ignorant people, and an enquiring world.

From the list annexed of the number of letters addressed, it will be seen that many officers have not responded. This is due to more than one cause. In many cases the letters from me to them miscarried, or worse yet, their replies when made, never reached me,—others again have procrastinated until forgetfulness or shame rendered them unwilling,—others, influenced no doubt by ill feeling towards me, and at the same time fearing to exhibit an active enmity, have sullenly refrained from all notice of my communication, knowing that I could not compel a reply, whilst another and a meaner class, thinking their testimony of more value than it really possessed, refused to give any information unless compelled by an official order, or a summons to attend in person.

To the procrastinating I extend my pity ; to the inimical, my defiance ; whilst for the hide-bound I reserve my most unmitigated contempt.

To the opposite and nobler class, who have manfully and consistently stood by me through good and evil report, by words and actions, by public avowals and private intimations, I can only return my warmest and sincerest thanks.

> "All are not just, because they do no wrong ;
> But he who will not wrong me when he may,
> He is the truly just."

The ordeal through which I have passed has been a severe one. Conscious of having committed no wrong, I was quite unprepared to find myself accused of crime. Condemned without a trial, and punished before being heard, I found myself placed in the anomalous position of being obliged to prove myself innocent of charges that had never been substantiated. Struck down by official zeal, in undue haste, I found, even in the highest, a disinclination to revise or redress. When forced by persistence and argument to grant a hearing, not the slightest executive aid was afforded, nor the least authority of the law permitted to support the right or confute the false. Deprived of all pay, private means were drained to reform a public wrong ; but in spite of every obstacle, I succeeded in obtaining a mass of testimony on every point, save one, and

that of very minor importance, which in the month of February was placed before the Commission. This evidence, with my own statement and defence, form the subject matter of this book; and in putting it forth I have been guided simply and solely by what I deem to be an imperative duty, not only to myself and my friends, but especially to my posterity. Receiving from my ancestors a name untarnished, it is obligatory on me to transmit it unsullied.

Treason to one's country has, at least, the merit of grandeur in its villainy; but treachery to one's comrades has not even that poor excuse. It is craven, contemptible, and unmitigated meanness—commending itself only to the pettiest thief and most cowardly calumniator. To devise such vileness is worthy only of the most debased; to charge it, unsubstantiated, on an innocent comrade, demands a still lower depth of degradation. The coward, who wronged his trusting country, by a dishonorable surrender; and the thief, who despoiled his suffering mates by a despicable larceny—may felicitate themselves on such an achievement; but, short of them, I know of no other living thing capable of it. That I could be guilty of such a crime, I am proud to say, never for one moment obtained credence in the mind of a single honorable man that knew me.

With my enemies—of whom I have my fair share; with the envious—who are greedy of slander; or with the world at large—to whom I am quite unknown—so gross a calumny has doubtless been received with avidity; and, borne as it was to all quarters of the country by means of the telegraph and public journals, it must inevitably be treasured up against my name for all time, and appear to my discomfort, or that of my descendants, at most inopportune moments. Many, who have heard and remembered the charge, will probably never hear the exculpation: I, who never seek for popular favor, nor ask, unoffered, any man's friendship, may personally derive no injury and suffer no discredit; but those who come after me may live in times when, to hold office, may be deemed honorable—and to them is due some record, whereby they may refute the slanderer or silence a foe.

"The honors of a name 'tis just to guard--
They are a trust but lent us, which we take;
And should, in reverence to the donor's fame,
With care transmit them down to other hands."

Mingled with the most heartfelt thanks to that High and Mighty Power, who directs and shapes the minds of men, is the just pride that the triumphant result I have achieved is due to my sole and unaided efforts. Fortunate in the friendship of hosts of worthy and influential gentlemen; upheld, during my year of terrible probation, by the strong moral support afforded me by their confidence and respect—not a single man among them, save the Hon. H. B. Anthony, (and he only for the purpose of procuring me a hearing,) has asked or sought to obtain the slightest favor or privilege from the Government or the Commission; but, whilst I can truthfully say—

"Alone, I did it!"

I gratefully confess that, to my dear friend and former companion in arms, GEORGE F. NOYES, Esq., I am deeply indebted for advice, assistance, and good counsel. To him is due whatever of order and proper classification may be found in my defence; whilst to his good taste and judgment may be ascribed the elimination of much bitterness and resentful feeling towards my opponents.

To the Honorable Secretary of War I cannot refrain from expressing my acknowledgments for the very complimentary terms he has been pleased to employ in the wording of his decision—almost compensating (if anything could) for the year of suffering and humiliation I have endured.

To the gentlemen composing the Military Commission, I am under the deepest obligations for the unvarying kindness and courtesy extended to me, and the patience with which they heard and investigated the lengthy documents placed before them. And, finally, to the officers of the Adjutant General's office, from the highest to the lowest, with whom I came in contact, I tender my thanks for the interest exhibited and the attention bestowed, at a moment and in a manner so opportune and grateful.

BROOKLYN, Nov., 1865.

# CHARGES AND SPECIFICATIONS

Against JAMES M. SANDERSON, an officer in the service of the United States, conveyed through the medium of a *familiar letter* from a Brigadier General in the Volunteer Service to a Major General in the Regular Service.

PORTLAND, April 4, 1864.

GENERAL,—I am this moment in receipt of your note of the 1st., inquiring if I have any information touching the conduct of Lieut. Col. SANDERSON, late a prisoner of war at Richmond.

I am *informed* of a great deal of his conduct at Richmond, and *took much interest in it*, because *I thought* he ought to be dismissed from the service. The conviction among the officers *generally* was, that he was disloyal, had little or no sympathy with our cause, but much for the rebels. On that point *I think* Col. Streight is particularly informed.

Soon after I came to Richmond from Mobile in October, *I learned* much of his sayings and doings, and had therefore no intercourse with him, though my quarters were very near his.

After my protest to Gen. Winder against the cruel treatment of our soldiers at Belle Island, I was not permitted to visit them any more, and the business of distributing the clothing to the soldiers—*all of which was sent to me*,—was put into his hands. Thus for weeks he came into daily contact with the soldiers there, and his conduct to them was always harsh and cruel. Once a poor fellow applied for some clothes, —he was very miserable with cold and hunger,—SANDERSON said : "Damn you, didn't I tell you if you came again I'd kick you?" He then turned him round, kicked him, and followed him with repeated kicks.

Capt. Atwood, 16th Maine, Lieut. Col. Archer, and others saw this!

One poor fellow barefooted, asked for shoes, and received curses instead. Capt. Atwood saw this. The next day but one Capt. Atwood saw the same man brought out in a blanket, with his feet badly frozen. *I think* he suffered amputation.

The Rebel lieutenant in charge remonstrated with SANDERSON for his harsh and cruel treatment of the soldiers in presence of Atwood.

His intercourse with the soldiers was always *with oaths*, and *curses*, and *bitter revilings*. Many of these poor fellows he caused to be bucked and gagged. And this to half starved and half frozen men, who had left friends, business, and comfortable homes, in some cases luxurious homes, to help save their country from being blotted out from the map of nations. Many of these men were educated gentlemen.

On one occasion, (a cold day,) a squad of men, half starved and pinched with cold, came out for clothes. At the head of the line, to be served first, was a soldier—thin and blue, curled up and shivering—his hands in his poor apologies for pockets. With oaths and curses, SANDERSON demanded why he did not take the position of a soldier ; and drove the poor wretch to the tail of the line—to wait a long hour or two, as a punishment.

Early last fall, we had arrangements nearly perfected for breaking out and capturing the city. We had about 1,000 officers and about 10,000 soldiers there, and were carelessly guarded. Suddenly, we saw two pieces of artillery planted near and bearing on us, and some companies of soldiers stationed in front of the prison. Soon we learned that Col. SANDERSON had betrayed us to the Rebels. The indignation of the officers was very great ; but it was finally allayed, upon assurances that there was no *intention* of communicating the secret beyond our own officers in the hospital. *Of these matters I am not personlly cognizant*, but *think* Col. Streight will be able to substantiate them.

After Col. Streight's unsuccessful attempt to escape, he was put into a dark, damp, and cold cell under-ground, in irons, and supplied only with corn bread and water. While he remained in that position, Col. SANDERSON told some Rebel offi-

cers that Streight had organized a plan to break out, capture, and destroy the city. This was told in presence of some of our officers—of whom Capt. Atwood, I *think*, was one.

Lt. Col. Archer and Capt. Atwood were often with Col. SANDERSON, at Belle Isle, and saw a great deal of him.

The U. S. Sanitary Commission sent a great quantity of supplies *to me*, for distribution; but the Rebels put them into the hands of Col. SANDERSON. Only a small part of them was distributed; I am confident that a part of them was given to the Rebels by Col. SANDERSON, besides what they stole; and Col. SANDERSON appropriated to his own use a case of egg-nogg that was marked for the hospital.

Col. SANDERSON was constantly defending the Rebels, and justifying them in their treatment of our soldiers—averring that they were properly treated. Some of this I heard on one occasion, and interposed with the facts at Belle Isle which existed under his observation.

Col. Di Cesnola of the Fourth New-York Cavalry—an officer of the Sardinian Army, and thoroughly true to our service and the cause—saw, heard, and knew much of Col. SANDERSON, their quarters being very near each other. Col. Cesnola, for the last two or three months, held no communication whatever with him—so certain was his conviction of his infidelity to the country. Col. Di Cesnola's address is—130 Madison Avenue. He will gladly furnish any information in his possession, as he believes the good of the service requires Col. SANDERSON's dismissal from it.

I have written to Capt. Atwood, at Gardiner, Maine—asking him to send you immediately full details of everything within his knowledge on this subject, with the names of other witnesses. I am not acquainted with the address of Lt. Col. Archer, but think he is of a Kentucky regiment.

My conviction was that Col. SANDERSON had no sympathy with the Union cause. His conversation, so far as I knew of it, indicated a decided hostility to the administration, and to its measures; and certainly he manifested no kindly feeling towards our soldiers, who were suffering so much in their country's service. By our officers, generally, at Richmond

he was regarded with distrust. Very few of them had any intercourse with him, and great care was used to keep every matter from his knowledge that we wished to keep from the Rebels.

I have thus answered your inquiries, *in a familiar way*, to the best of my knowledge, tho' I might add a great quantity of similar matter.

Very respectfully yours,
NEAL DOW,
*Brig. Gen'l.*

Major-Gen'l. E. A. HITCHCOCK,
*Comm'r for Exchange of Prisoners,*
Washington, D. C.

## MEMORANDUM OF

Statement made by Corp. W. A. TAYLOR, Co. E, Sixth N. Y. Cavalry.

Was taken prisoner at the battle of Bristoe Station, (or the day after,) 14th day of October, 1863 ; was sent to Richmond, and was among the prisoners at Belle Isle. He was at Belle Isle when our Government, a few months since, sent supplies of clothing and provisions to Union prisoners in Richmond. Gen. Neal Dow was employed at first, with some others under him, to distribute to the prisoners these supplies. He was employed in this about four or five days, when Col. Cesnola with one other officer, took the place of Gen. Dow, and continued about two or three weeks : these officers issued neither provisions or clothing ; they made rolls of the men, showing what they wanted. During much of this time, the boxes of supplies sent by the Government were piled up on the Island, and many of them were broken open at night, as he supposes, by the Rebels—because they were outside of the enclosure where the prisoners were confined. After this, Col. SANDERSON was employed to deliver the supplies—assisted, from time to time, by another Federal officer. He was employed two or

three hours a day, for some three months. During this time, he issued no provisions at all. Col. SANDERSON was very harsh in his treatment of the men. During this time, he (Taylor) was with Col. SANDERSON, under his orders, assisting in the delivery of the supplies of clothing.

Occasionally, a man or so would come out and ask for particular articles; and he has heard Col. SANDERSON repeatedly use harsh language towards them, and order them away—calling them "dirty fellows;" and, very often, he has seen him kick them; and he has heard him order some of the men to be bucked. The men were suffering very much from cold and the want of provisions. Col. SANDERSON seemed to have no patience with them: he seemed to use them more like brutes than like men. The reason why he ordered them to be bucked, as he supposes, was that they had sold some of their clothing for the purpose of obtaining food. A considerable number of the Rebel guards were clothed in the United States' clothing, much of which was obtained from the Union soldiers—as he (Taylor) supposed, in exchange for provisions; but not all of it, for he saw Col. SANDERSON give some of it away to the Rebels—especially did he see the Colonel give to one man an overcoat.

Out of the coffee and sugar sent by the Federal Government, the prisoners received coffee and sugar twice—I mean, for two mornings, and no more; the balance was otherwise disposed of. He (Taylor) saw a Rebel Quarter-master cross the river with a quantity of the public supplies, in a boat marked for Fredericksburg. Is persuaded in his own mind that a large quantity of such supplies were consumed by the Rebels, and saw the guard eating them.

Adds, that he saw Col. SANDERSON very intimate with some of the Rebel officers, and appeared to have private conversations with them; but did not know what passed upon those occasions. Have seen Col. SANDERSON standing with Rebel officers—when some of the Union prisoners would approach, with their hands in their pockets, in rags and tatters; and Col. SANDERSON, instead of commiserating their condition, would seem to make sport of them, and order them to take

their hands out of their pockets Corp. Taylor thinks that Serg. Hill could also make a statement similar to the above, for he was employed with himself in delivering clothing under Col. SANDERSON'S order : the Sergeant belongs to Co. K, same regiment.

The above is a true statement—

W. A. TAYLOR,

Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

WASHINGTON CITY, April 1, 1864.

STATEMENT OF LT. COL. J. M. SANDERSON.

I hereby state, *on honor*, that on the 20th day of July, 1863, whilst marching from the field of Gettysburg, Pa., into Virginia, I was requested by Major Wm. Russell, Jr., Acting Ass't Adj't General, of the First Corps, to accompany him in search for a ford over a deep, swift stream, called Goose Creek. Having obtained permission from the Major Gen'l Comm'g, John Newton, we proceeded on our mission. The first crossing we examined, proving too strong and too deep for either artillery or infantry, we retraced our steps, and halting the column, ere turning out of the main road, set forth again to seek another which was represented as being superior. After a *detour* of nearly five miles, we finally reached the object of our search, and while the Major was writing a despatch to send back to the General, I crossed the ford, for the purpose of testing it. Finding it all that could be desired, I returned to my companion, who had sent off his message, and was quietly watering his horse near the middle of the stream, the only remaining orderly being near him. Reporting to him the result of my investigation, and debating as to whether we should await the arrival of the Corps, or proceed on our road, we were startled by an unearthly yell, which, as we soon discovered, came from a band of guerillas, who, under cover of the noise arising from the mill-dam, and hidden by the thick foliage of the trees which fringed the road on the opposite side of the creek, had stolen upon us unawares. Being twelve in number and armed to the teeth, resistance on our part was

in vain. Having disarmed us, we were carried to Culpepper, and subsequently taken to Richmond. Here we were placed in the celebrated and infamous den known as "Libby Prison," with about six hundred other Federal officers. At this period, the space allotted to this class of prisoners of war, comprised *three* lofts, each 100 by 40 feet, on the third or upper floor, and one on the second of similar dimensions. The latter was occupied mostly by officers of Milroy's command, the apartment over it being set apart for Col. A. D. Streight, and his immediate companions, with some few cavalry officers taken during the fight in June. These two rooms constituted one department, known as the "Western," and were for a time under Col. Streight's command, although he was not the ranking officer. The other two lofts were mainly devoted to the prisoners taken at the battle of Gettysburg and subsequently, most of them belonging to the Army of the Potomac. These constituted the "Eastern Department," and were under the direction of Col. Charles W. Tilden, of the 16th Maine, the ranking officer. Into this section my companion and myself were turned loose, by the prison official, who kindly advised us to select the softest plank we could find, and make ourselves comfortable. Immediately on our arrival we were placed in full knowledge of the nature of our prison fare, by scores of willing relators, who I will do them the justice to say, on that point did not exaggerate. On making a reconnoisance the next day, we soon discovered that the best portion of our prison-house was reserved for the residents in Streight's room, every one of them having the undivided half of a *bunk*, with all the privileges and stock thereunto appertaining. As no other apartment possessed seats of any kind, and as a grateful south-western breeze visited it at almost every hour of the day and night, it became in a measure, the lounging hall of the heat-oppressed and heart-sick prisoner.

In this department they enjoyed another privilege, which, up to the time of my arrival, had been denied the Eastern section, that of preparing their own food. A few days after, however, this defect was remedied, and stoves being placed at one end of the centre apartment, rations of meat, rice, and

beans, were served us uncooked. Luckily for my comrades, but unfortunately for me, as the result has proven, my reputation as a hotel-keeper and amateur cook being known, I was solicited to superintend the culinary and messing arrangements, and teach my brother officers how to prepare their food. Having pledged me active co-operation, and proper subordination, I accepted this very arduous position. The company being divided into twelve messes of from 18 to 20 each, I apportioned each stove, there being but three, to four messes, allowing one hour to prepare breakfast, and three hours for dinner. The tables also were parcelled out, so as to prevent interference, or collision between the various parties. The utensils being limited to our most primitive necessities, the least interruption or delay in preparing the meals caused much inconvenience and wrangling. A very short experience convinced me that but little dependence was to be placed on the forbearance or courtesy of my fellow-prisoners, one to the other, and feeling some pride in carrying out successfully the task assigned me, I was forced to obtain from the prison authorities the official approval of my regulations, which were carefully digested, clearly written, and conveniently posted, so "that he that runs might read." Thus fortified, I took my stand, among the earliest, by the fire, and "from early dawn to dewy eve," for nearly three months, was ever to be found at my post, teaching the uninformed, advising the willing, directing the erring, and curbing the wrong-headed. The one, before salting his soup, sought me; the other, doubtful as to his progress, took counsel with me; the third, demurring at robbing his mixture of its traditionary grease, disputed my philosophy; whilst the fourth, seeking only his own comfort, tested my endurance, and endeavored to break through my discipline. Every new-comer served an apprenticeship under my hands; and every difficulty was subjected to my arbitrament; and for a time so well did this system work, that the Western department, which had formerly been the object of our envy, suddenly became emulous of our comfort, and sought, by adopting our system, to rid themselves of a spirit of insubordination, which threatened to sweep away all authority, but that of force.

Some opposition being evinced, and an unanimous invitation being indispensable to my acceptance, a meeting was called, at which the officers comprising the smaller messes, foremost among them Col. Streight, succeeded in interposing so many obstacles that the whole thing was abandoned in disgust, and disorder and selfishness reigned thenceforth triumphant. Subsequent to this, during a political discussion between Col. Streight and another officer, the former made a most outrageous statement, which he called upon me, an uninterested listener, to endorse. This I not only declined, but even refused to believe. Infuriated by this unexpected rebuff, he forgot what little manners he was possessed of, and loudly branded me "as a knave or a fool." Somewhat puzzled as to what course to pursue, under the circumstances, with such a burly and brutal antagonist, I remained perfectly silent for a few minutes, until emboldened by my supposed cowardice, he repeated the offensive epithets *three times*. Unable to endure this longer I quickly rose from my seat on the floor, and approaching him as near as was possible, made this reply: "Col. Streight there is a certain amount of respect due from my rank to yours, which I am always ready to accord, but you have now passed the limit beyond which no man can go with impunity; I therefore proclaim you a *liar* and a *coward!*" From that day to this no other words have passed between this officer and myself. Generally condemned, as far as I could learn, by every one whose opinion was worth having, Col. Streight omitted no opportunity of abusing and vilifying me behind my back, all of which I treated with silent contempt.

At length, however, an event occurred which enabled him to regain his waning popularity, and turn the current of popular opinion against me and my immediate friends. Taking advantage of the chronic complaints against the quantity of food issued us by our keepers, he addressed a letter to Gen. Winder, asserting that we were in the daily receipt of but half a pound of bread, and a quarter of a pound of meat—which, he claimed, was totally inadequate to support life. Summoning the Commissary of the prison (a Mr. Burnham,

who had then and subsequently given us many evidences of his sympathy) before him, the notorious Winder demanded why he had defrauded the prisoners of one-half the rations furnished by the Confederate Government. Indignantly denying the charge, Mr. Burnham promised to produce evidence of his honesty; and, on returning to the prison, notified us that thereafter we must select an officer from each department in whom we had confidence—whose duty it should be to see the rations weighed, and superintend personally their transfer to the officers' quarters.

From the "Eastern department" was selected a Lt. Jones; whilst, from the "Western," was chosen a Capt. McHollick, an officer belonging to *Streight's own regiment*. These gentlemen, thenceforth, presented themselves at the Commissary Department, every morning, with a requisition for eighteen ounces of bread and half a pound of fresh meat, for every officer or individual confined in the prison. In their presence the scales were tested; the required amount of food furnished; and its transfer to the upper rooms, by agency of negroes, (also prisoners of War,) made under their supervision. As anxious as any one for an increase of rations; and believing, in common with my comrades, that we were not receiving our full quota, I curiously awaited the first supply under the new order of things; and was proportionately disappointed in finding the amount the same. Closely questioning the new Commissaries, I was satisfied in my own mind that we had erred, especially when each day's supplies confirmed the fact. Many of the officers, however, stoutly contended we were receiving more; but they were not in a position to judge; whilst I, having occasion to see the exact quantity delivered to each mess and subsequently put into the soup pots, could speak "by the book." At length, a proper time having elapsed, Mr. Burnham demanded from the Commissaries a certificate to the effect that he had not only delivered the exact amount as required, during the time specified, but that (as far as they could judge) he had done so for some time previous. This they not only acceded to, but went further—too far, in my opinion: by saying that there was a general satisfaction

among the prisoners on the subject of their treatment by all the officers attached to the prison. This certificate, thus worded, was brought up stairs by Mr. Burnham to Col. Tilden and myself, in our official capacity as commandant of the room and director of the kitchen. Mr. Burnham being a perfect stranger to me, of course I had no bias in his favor; and, after reading Lt. Jones' certificate, frankly professed my willingness to endorse it as far as I was personally concerned, but did not feel justified in speaking for any other officer; and Col. Tilden, when referred to, coincided with me. Anxious to obtain our signature, he finally said, we might put it in any shape most agreeable to ourselves. Thereupon, we added these words: "In endorsing our approval, we desire to state distinctly that we speak for ourselves, individually and personally, and not for any other officer in the prison." With this paper he sought Col. Cesnola, for the purpose of obtaining his approval to another one drawn up by Capt. McHollick (Streight's own man), in which the "lie direct" was given to his commander. This rather alarmed Cesnola, who exhibited it to another officer—a friend of Streight (as, at that moment, there existed a coldness between Streight and Cesnola.) By him the paper was shown to Streight himself, who immediately requested a copy—not only of that, but of the one given by Jones, and endorsed by Tilden and myself: but Cesnola, on being referred to, declined to permit it, unless a pledge was given that no use should be made of it to the disparagement of Tilden and myself; nor, in fact, should it be exhibited without his (Cesnola's) consent. This pledge, Cesnola assured me, was given, and the copying permitted. On the following day, after the reading of the *Libby Chronicle*, (a weekly paper, published *but not printed*,) these documents were publicly read to an unusually large crowd convened for the occasion; and an announcement was made that, on the following day, a meeting would be held "for the purpose of passing resolutions condemnatory of the course of Col. Tilden and Col. SANDERSON."

As stated, the meeting took place. Its officers were Major Bates, 80th Ills., Chairman; Major Harry White, 67th Penna.,

Secretary; Lt. Col. Jere Williams, 25th Ohio; Dr. Spencer, (Streight's surgeon,) and Capt. B. F. Fisher, committee on resolutions. The speakers were Lt. Col. Irvin, 10th N. Y. Cav'y, Major Henry, 5th Ohio Cav'y, and the much-injured Streight. As I was not present, I am unable to speak knowingly of the proceedings, but from conversation we learned that Col. Streight made remarks of a most personal, abusive and threatening character; speaking in most discourteous terms of the writer, and offering to fight one or both of the parties assailed. The cause of all this ire, as far as we were able to discover, arose, not from our making a false statement, but in our proving Col. Streight to have done so; and the ground assumed by some of our opponents was, that we were not justified in rescuing an enemy's officer from a dilemma, *even though he was in the right!* To this we simply replied, "that, on being asked a straightforward question, we could only give a straightforward answer; and for one, I never feared to put in writing, what I had deliberately expressed orally. As regards an enemy's officer, where Justice and Truth were concerned, I recognized neither friend nor foe; and before my fealty to my country I owed an allegiance to my God. I was a man before I was a soldier, and had always been taught, that "justice should be done though the heavens fall!" Among the dissentients to our course, the most determined, and at the same time the most dignified, were Lt. Col. Williams, Major Bates, Major Henry, and Capt. Fisher, between all of whom and myself there sprung up a coldness which lasted for some time, but as time wore on, and our comforts were increased, explanations took place, and reconciliation ensued. As a good deal of feeling very justly existed in regard to Lt. Jones' statement as to the satisfaction of his comrades towards the officers of the prison, the paper containing this expression was returned to us, and another, doing *full justice* to Mr. Burnham, personally, and *to the conduct of the Confederacy generally*, was substituted, and this "tempest in a teapot" subsided; although a considerable feeling of uneasiness prevailed for a long time as to the course I should pursue when released, the attention of the moving spirits be-

ing especially called to the 26th Art. of the Revised Army Regulations.

During all this time my duties as Culinary Director were constantly increasing, every new comer, or "fresh fish," being turned over to me for instruction. At last a vast augmentation of our numbers took place, from the unlucky field of Chickamauga, giving us some three or four hundred officers additional, every one of whom was thrust into our quarters. For a day or two all regulations were set at nought, and disorder and confusion prevailed everywhere, but increased accommodations having been furnished us, I undertook to regulate the cooking department of the strangers, and in less than a week "all went merry as a marriage bell," barring of course the usual amount of bickering and ill temper. But this increased amount of work was rather too severe for me, and I was finally forced to succumb to a violent cold caught in the performance of my duties. For a few days I laid down in my quarters, on the floor, without the slightest medical attention, or necessary comforts; and in reply to my application to be sent to the hospital, was informed that it was so full, that it was impossible to accommodate as many as absolutely required to be there. But at length my friends became alarmed, and I was permitted to stagger down to the building, employed for that purpose, about a quarter of a mile below us. On arriving here, sick and exhausted, there was no bed ready for me, and it was only after a distressing delay, that I was enabled to secure one, (I mention these things merely to show the great consideration I was held in by the enemy.) Into this I immediately plunged, and remained almost senseless and motionless for thirty-six hours. On the second day, finding myself better after my long and comfortable repose, I rose and dressed myself, and for a short time conversed with my brother officers. I then prescribed for myself, took my own medicines, which I always carry with me, and again returned to my bed. The surgeon in charge, Dr. Siball, after examining me, and hearing what I had done, declined to interfere with my own treatment, and passed on. The next morning after the proper operation of my medicine, I found myself so much better that I concluded to return to

my quarters at the prison, influenced thereto by several reasons,—first, because I found the groanings and distresses of my fellow-prisoners, both officers and privates, all occupying the same building, were so terrible as to depress my spirits,—second, because the accommodations afforded the officers were so limited, as to prevent full justice being done to the really sick,—and third, because all the operations of nature had to be performed in a filthy and disgusting place, in common with the private soldiers, who were by no means particular as to appearances or cleanliness. Making up "my kit," and distributing among the most needy, my stock of provisions, of which I had laid in a goodly store, I informed the surgeon of my desire to leave, and greatly against his advice, persisted in my determination, returning to my prison quarters on the third day.

During the few hours that I found myself sufficiently recovered to converse with my comrades, I related to a few of the prominent ones, Col. Powell, Col. Monroe Nichols, Capt. Skelton, and perhaps one or two others, some of the incidents of our prison life, and disclosed to some of them the outlines of a proposed plan of escape, which had grown into proportions from a suggestion made by myself, when it was expected that we should be removed from Richmond to Salisbury, N. C., owing to the scarcity of food in the former city. This idea had seized me shortly after my difficulty with Col. Streight, and having before my eyes a healthy fear of the penalties attached to a conspiracy to escape, when loss of life might eventuate, (see order No. 100,) and having no confidence in the warm feelings of my Southern friends towards me in case of conviction, I acted with that circumspection necessary to one who plots with his head in his hand.

Believing that Streight and his immediate associates had no personal love for me, and fearing also the enmity of certain men in my own quarters, whose insubordinate conduct and character had more than once brought them under my official displeasure, I stated my views very secretly and very charily. To Cols. Tilden, Cesnola, and Wilson, Lt. Cols. Rogers, Cavada, Walker, Spofford, Henry, and Hayes, and Majors

Russell, Henry, White, and Neeper, I was frank and open, leaving to them to elaborate the details, and select their aids.

As originally devised, the plan was this: Selecting from the great mass a few brave and prudent men to act as field and line officers, the remainder were to be recruited, under the seal of secrecy, as non-commissioned officers and privates; each captain selecting his company from his own associates, disclosing to each as much of the plan as would be deemed necessary to insure his hearty co-operation, and willingness to drill punctually and obey orders. Having an exaggerated opinion of Col. Cesnola at that moment, he was invited to take the leadership, whilst Col. Tilden and the other ranking officers were to constitute the line. I, myself, volunteering as a high private under Tilden. In the midst of our deliberations, however, the battle of Chickamauga occurred and swelled by its results the number of our comrades to about a thousand, while the sum total of the rank and file amounted to over ten thousand, one third of which were confined in tobacco warehouses directly opposite to us. As soon as we became sufficiently acquainted, the leading spirits of the Western Army, among them that gallant and lamented officer, Col. Bartleson, the pluckey and nettlesome Lefavour, the accomplished Carleton, and the indomitable Rose were taken into confidence, and, the question of removal being dropped, it was proposed to give a more extended character to our enterprise, and attempt with the aid of our own government, a feat of arms and strategy which should at once give us both liberty and renown. Being under the impression that there was a spy among us—a not impossible event—all our consultations resolved themselves into *tete-a-tete* interviews, Col. Cesnola being the common medium, to him being intrusted our various suggestions for the purpose of enabling him to elaborate and perfect the necessary details. Having obtained a map of the city, and learning the exact depots of arms and artillery, the places of rendezvous of the militia, the residence of the arch-fiend Davis, and his head-devils, Benjamin, Seddon, and others, and of the different members of Congress, *when it should be convened*, we cast about

to find means to apprise our own government of our intentions. At this juncture a rebel officer came to the prison and obtained, in exchange for himself, the release of a federal officer of corresponding rank, he being a Lieutenant-Colonel on the staff of John Morgan. By right Lt. Col. Von Schrader, Lt. Col. J. F. Boyd, or myself were the only parties entitled to this exchange, but by some means Lt. Col. Irvin, of the 10th N. Y. Cavalry, was fortunate enough to be selected, and to him, as I learned from Cesnola, was confided the details of our plan, to be narrated to the government. In the meantime we quietly proceeded with our arrangements, and awaited some indications of the acquiescence of the military authorities at home.

During this interregnum it was that I was taken sick and carried to the hospital. The next or succeeding day after my return to my quarters, while still very weak and far from well, I was told by Col. Cesnola that Streight had been occupying himself in devising a plan of escape by which he proposed to carry off all the honors, deeming our scheme entirely too slow and too old fogyish for his ardent and enthusiastic temperament. The minutiæ of his proposed exodus were simple and few. On a fixed night—shortly to arrive—the City Battallion, a military organization which had had charge of us heretofore, being withdrawn for a limited space for the purpose of improving themselves in drill and camp duty, their places being filled by Pickett's Division of veteran troops, the heroes of a hundred fights,—he and his chosen band were to break from the prison, overpower the guard, and, if strong enough, fire the city, and take the chances of capturing it, or of making their escape into our own lines. Taking into consideration that the city was full of militia ; and that four thousand regulars were in convenient distance ; that his one or two hundred heroes had no organization and no arms ; with every avenue to our lines carefully guarded, and the means of concentrating the various regiments instantaneous ; and with nothing to occupy their attention but the exciting chase after a hundred or two half-starved Yankee prisoners—I could not but regard such an idea as emanating from none but a lunatic

or a braggadocio, and did not hesitate to pronounce it murderous and fool-hardy ; and was greatly relieved to learn that not even his most cherished associates were willing to assist in such an enterprise, obliging him to fall back upon his subalterns, of whom he had contrived to gain over to his plan not over a hundred, or a hundred and fifty at the utmost.

Whilst discussing the merits of this scheme we were startled by observing an unusual commotion in the streets, an extra number of guards being posted around our prison, and at least two pieces of artillery being placed so as to command the exits. More severity was also used in carrying out the prison regulations, no one, for a time, being permitted to approach the windows. At first we were inclined to suppose that our long-talked-of removal was to be effected. Then a rumor pervaded our quarters that the citizens of Richmond had declared their intention of opening our prison doors and setting us free, on the ground that we were raising the price of subsistence so high that they and their families were on the point of starvation. After two days' wonderment and alarm the extra guard were suddenly withdrawn, the artillery quietly removed, and everything jogged on as usual. And then it was, for the first, we learned that we had perfected a plan for escape which had been betrayed by one of our own number. This startling intelligence was communicated either by Mr. Higgins, Winder's private secretary, to Col. Cesnola, or by the notorious Dick Turner to Col. Streight, I am unable to say which. All this time it must be remembered that I was an invalid, having only a morning or two previous to the event narrated above fallen down in a fainting fit whilst standing up in line for "roll call." A day or two after things had resumed their usual current, and we were racking our brains to discover the traitor among us, Cesnola came to me and taking me aside informed me that Streight had charged me in his own room with being the "guilty one." Furiously indignant, in spite of my weakness, I desired to confront the foul slanderer at once, but in view of the utter impossibility of my taking any suitable vengeance, or of obtaining any redress from my brutal and vulgar calumniator, I was perforce obliged

to adopt Cesnola's advice and leave to time the mode of obtaining satisfaction. I frankly acknowledge that this calumny exercised me greatly, and I could not but blame myself for having spoken at all on the subject while in the hospital, believing, as I conscientiously did, that some eaves-dropper or "weak-kneed brother" had over-heard my disclosures to my brother officers there, and had communicated the meagre details afforded to the confederates. Every day and every hour this thought haunted me, and I spared no effort to discover if such could have been the case, but I was assured by all that I conversed with, who had spent any time in the hospital-that every one of the attendants, including the Ward Master, with whom I had had a few minutes conversation, were all federal prisoners, and as anxious to have such a scheme successfully carried out as myself. There was one person, however, of whom some suspicion was entertained—a Mr. Vermillion of Keokuk, Iowa, a citizen clerk or sutler—but as no substantial proof at *that* time was presented, I hesitated to affix such a damning crime to his charge, especially as I knew him to be a friend of one of the most gallant officers I ever met, Capt. R. F. Skelton, and moreover could not remember of having conversed with him on any subject. After a few weeks, this incident being driven from my mind by other and equally exciting rumors, died out, and as the *contre-temps* had no marked effect upon our real plans, it was only remembered as one of a series of slanders gotten up against me by the same clique.

About this time, however, an incident occurred which afforded my enemies a splendid chance to exercise their vocation. Capt. Atwood, a member of my mess, and the source of much annoyance to me by his captious and quarrelsome disposition, being constantly engaged in some petty and contemptible squabble of which I was compelled to be arbiter, called my attention to the conduct of a young man belonging to one of the loyal Virginia regiments. On learning the facts I endeavored to smooth the difficulty, but as Atwood demanded his rights, and as his antagonist was clearly in the wrong by occupying at an improper time a place on a

stove belonging to another mess, I was forced to act in the matter, my indisposition to do so willingly arising entirely from the fact that Atwood was a member of my own mess, and any decision I should make in his favor would be deemed partial. Having explained his error to the culprit, I courteously requested him to remove his vessel and await his turn on his own stove. This he flatly refused, being encouraged thereto by a number of his intimates drawn there by the report of the difficulty, and when I attempted to take the kettle from the fire myself, he threatened me with a case knife, which he displayed with much flourish and great emphasis. Not greatly terrified by this sudden apparition of deadly iron, but at the same time quite unwilling to engage in a personal encounter with one so much my junior in rank and age, he being a second lieutenant just out of his teens, I released my hold on the offending pot and drawing my watch from my pocket, informed my excited opponent that I would give him just *five minutes* to decide whether he would remove it himself or go down to the cells. "Will *you* send me to the cells?" was his rather astonished question. "I certainly will, unless that kettle is removed," was my quiet reply. "You don't dare do it!" shouted he, shaking his fist in my face. "That, Sir, is simply a question of time." "If you do," was his response, "*I will have your heart's blood!*"—I did. At the expiration of the five minutes, the kettle being still there, I notified the Inspector of the Prison, and demanded that my authority should be sustained by making an example of this offender. Instantly acceding to my request, I asked him to carry this domestic Rebel down stairs, introduce him to the cells, and then inform him that having the power to inflict this punishment I merely desired to convince him of that fact, as this was his first offence, but that a recurrence of such insubordination would inevitably earn for him a night's lodging therein. This, as I afterwards learned, was done; but not exactly in conformity with my programme, Mr. Turner taking to himself *all* the credit of the *leniency*, leaving for me all the *odium*.

For a few days, of course, the indignation of this much in-

jured young gentleman and his friends was perfectly intense —a committee of them waiting upon me for the purpose of ascertaining if I deemed such conduct loyal. To which I very soberly replied that I did ; whereat their astonishment was marvelously increased, and only found vent in an emphatic demand that I should resign. This I very respectfully declined to do, on the ground that I had been invited to fill the position by a very large majority of the officers in the Department ; and I did not feel called upon to obey the requirements of a disorderly and contemptible minority. I also assured them that I felt so well satisfied with the result of this action that it was my determination hereafter to resort to it, whenever circumstances would demand its application. Upon, this the interview closed, and I was permitted to rest in peace; but on reflection, finding that I was exhausting my patience and health, and increasing the number and virulence of my enemies needlessly, I concluded to turn over the reins of power to my constituents and permit them to select a successor of more pliant character, but up to the moment of my leaving they had failed to secure so great a treasure, or in fact to find any one willing to assume the command I had relinquished.

The next item of interest in our prison life arose from the reception of a large amount of subsistence and clothing sent by the United States government and the Sanitary and Christian Commissions for distribution to our sick and suffering soldiers. Brigadier General Neal Dow being the ranking officer—he having returned from Mobile prison about the 26th or 28th of October—all this material was addressed to him, and having selected one or two officers to accompany him and aid in the issuing, he was taken over to the Island and permitted to use his own judgment in its distribution. How long he enjoyed this privilege I am unprepared to state positively, as I busied himself neither with *his* incomings or outgoings , "*his* sayings or doings," but the term was short, not over three days at the utmost. The cause of his being relieved was rumored to be an ill-advised and unfortunate protest to Gen. Winder on the subject of rations, to which the

only response he received was an invitation to mind his own business, and an order placing three other gentlemen in his stead. This Committee consisted of Col. C. P. di Cesnola, 4th N. Y. Cav., Lt. Col. J. F. Boyd, Chief Q. M. 20th Corps, Lt. Col. A. Von Schrader, A. I. G. 14th Corps, to whom was assigned the distribution of the clothing *only*, the subsistence and Sanitary supplies being placed in charge of the rebel officers *exclusively*.

For three weeks everything under the direction of these gentlemen went on swimmingly. Col. Boyd, one of the most systematic of Quarter-masters, prepared blanks for his colleagues, who, with the aid of clerks, selected from the prisoners themselves, soon filled them up with the name, rank, company, regiment, and *condition of the clothing* of every man on the Island, in order to see how far the stock on hand would enable them to go in distributing to the more needy the various articles most required. Hardly had this been achieved, when Col. Cesnola, by some interference with the action of the authorities, brought down upon his head their ire and displeasure, which evinced itself by a notification that his services would no longer be needed. This intelligence was brought him by his friend, Mr. Higgins, who gave him the privilege of naming his successor. His first choice, I think, was Col. Tilden, who declined, in consequence of being in command of a department, which he did not care to relinquish. I was then solicited to take the position, and also declined ; but, at the earnest request of Col. Cesnola, and the rather persistent solicitation of Major Turner, the Commandant of the Prison, who informed me that my name had been uniformly suggested by my brother-officers "as the one most fitted by temper and capacity" (I quote his own words) "for this particular duty ;" and as it was for the interest of my own Government that it should be properly done, he did not think me justified in refusing. Unable to assign any satisfactory reason for a further objection, I was obliged to accept, with the proviso that if, after a trial, I should be dissatisfied, I would be permitted to retire. This being acceded to, on the 21st day of November. I entered upon the duties.

After visiting the Island once in company with Col. Von Schrader, we applied for the addition of another officer, and, at my suggestion, Lt. Col. Hunter, of the 123d Ohio Vols., was added to the committee, and the following division of labor was agreed to :—Col. Boyd was charged with the accounts, myself with the distribution of the clothing on the Island, and Cols. Von Schrader and Hunter with the examination and enrolment of the prisoners confined in the warehouses and hospitals in the City of Richmond. Capt. Chamberlain, of the 123d Ohio, was subsequently added to the committee without my knowledge or consent. After a short experience in the details of my labor, I found it impossible to proceed without a companion, and accordingly asked and obtained permission to take with me Lt. Col. F. F. Cavada, of the 114th Penn. Vols. In this selection I was greatly guided by the fact of Col. Cavada being an accomplished gentleman and suffering greatly from depression of spirits caused by long imprisonment. His duties were simply to examine the letters passing between the officers and the men, and *vice versa*, in order to carry out a stipulation entered into with Lt. Bossieux, requiring us to deliver to him any one containing improper or contraband expressions. This arrangement was effected in order to expedite letter writing—the number passing between the two points averaging from fifty to one hundred daily—the reading of which proving too tedious for the lieutenant, many of them were thrown aside and never reached their destination. Trusting to my honor to carry out this agreement in good faith, he never thereafter took the trouble to open any communication unless his attention was specially invoked—an event, I am sorry to say, of too frequent occurrence, in spite of the numerous cautions given by me to my fellow-prisoners. The Colonel was also sometimes called upon to relieve me in the issuing of clothing, but not often. After five days co-operation, however, this gentleman was obliged to resign the position, in consequence of ill-health ; and my next friend and fellow-captive, Major William Russell, Jun., was invited to take his place. He accompanied me for five or six days, when he, too, succumbed to a cold, and fell ill. My next invitation was to Col.

Tilden, but, owing to the duties of his position, he declined in favor of Capt. Atwood, who formed the fourth in our mess. By no means avaricious of this man's society, I only yielded at Tilden's earnest request, and in order to avoid a personal ill-feeling. At the end of ten days, however, fortune favored me, and I was enabled to rid myself of his companionship, under the plea of a desire to afford as many as possible the opportunity of visiting their commands and, in some cases, their immediate relations. Capt. Wentworth, I think, was my next companion, and each day thereafter I selected a different person, giving the preference to those having the largest number of their command confined there; and, in doing this, it will be observed that I treated my friends and foes alike—many gentlemen accompanying me for the express purpose of *watching* my *actions* and *noting* my *conduct*. Of this, of course, I was at the moment entirely ignorant; but, even had I known it, so conscious was I of having nothing to conceal, that I sincerely affirm that in no jot or title would I have altered my demeanor to man or officer, friend or foe.

A very brief experience disclosed to me the almost utter demoralization existing in that encampment, of which a gang of robbers and murderers, who had joined the army to obtain the immense bounties paid by cities, States, and Government, (better known as "bounty-jumpers,") had the entire control. Every squad that presented itself before me brought numerous victims of their villainous practices. Old men and young, the strong and the weak, the healthy and the sick were alike the sufferers. No place was sacred and no refuge secure, and day and night were equally auspicious. Money, clothing, or subsistence, in turn, tempted them; and it mattered little, whether it was the last dollar or the last crust, if opportunity offered or time served for their nefarious purposes: so horrid were the details and so numerous the complaints, that I was sickened and bewildered. Yielding easily, at first, to the dictates of pity, I replaced without much questioning the missing and needed articles, of which they had been so wrongfully despoiled; but my suspicions having been at length aroused by some suspicious circumstances; and, learning, upon closer

scrutiny, that I had been imposed upon by some of the very worst raiders themselves, I became doubtful and distrusting, and demanded clearer proof and corroborating testimony.

Very much disgusted and shocked at the conduct of these scoundrels, who robbed and even murdered to obtain any article possessing merchantable value in the eyes of the Rebel guards, who cared little if the article presented to them was slightly stained with the blood of its last owner, provided he were a Yankee, I appealed to Lieut. Bossieux to institute some measures by which this horrid series of crimes could be abated; but he very soon convinced me that the remedy was only in the hands of the men themselves. All he could do, with his limited guards, was to prevent escape, and keep the hostile masses under apparent control. Any internal regulations, other than policing the camp, were beyond the scope of his duty; and it did not require much sagacity on my part to discover that a little demoralization, more or less, among the troops of the enemy, was not considered a cause of many tears to him or his superiors.

By no means pleased with this discovery, and greatly humiliated by this gross misconduct of men engaged in a cause almost as sacred as religion, I racked my brains to devise some efficacious means to mitigate the evil, if not remove it altogether. Complaints, advice, and persuasion, producing no effect, I at length tried reproaches and severity, and any able-bodied man coming to me with his tale of oppression and woe, proceeding from his own comrades, was promised a *petticoat* or a woolen *shift*, in lieu of the blanket, or overcoat he had so pusillanimously defended. This at length touched a responsive chord, and I was approached by a small and select number, who respectfully represented that they did not like to be told they were *old women*, and *cowards;* and asked that I would suggest some plan by which, while protecting themselves, they would convince me, and their enemies, that they were not only men, but brave ones too. Delighted at this exhibition of pluck and wounded pride, I immediately gave them the necessary instructions for organizing a special police for the protection of themselves and fellow-

prisoners, and the detection and punishment of the guilty. In less than twenty-four hours two of the most vicious of the band of ruffians were brought before me, having been caught in the very act. Having obtained permission of Lieut. Bossieux to inflict a limited punishment, I ordered them to be bucked—the *extent* of *my power*—and placed them in such a position that the whole camp could see them, with the word "*Raider*" conspicuously posted on their back, informing them at the same time, that my greatest regret was that I couldn't put the rope round their necks instead of their wrists. The next day three men were brought out, badly beaten in their efforts to escape, and they also were bucked. Subsequently two others were caught by the police selling the clothing *they had just drawn from me* to the Confederate guard. As this was also the prolific source of much annoyance, and the incentive for much dissimulation and fraud, I made an example of the culprits by bucking each of them for an hour; and these instances included *every case* of punishment in which I was, directly or indirectly, interested.

One other incident occurred which, as it has been made a matter of grave accusation against me, I will explain here. A poor, dilapidated wretch was brought before me in a most miserable state. All I could learn from him was that his name was Berry, and he belonged to one of the regular regiments—the 13th, I think. From his manner and the laughter of those who surrounded me, (both Federal and Confederate,) I was led to believe him half-witted, and gave him all the necessary clothing of which he was deficient. In a few days he again presented himself, in a worse condition, if possible, than before. Again I clothed him, charging him to be more careful of his raiment. A third time he appeared before me, under the plea of having been robbed. Somewhat annoyed and irritated, I was, nevertheless, on the point of issuing the order to reclothe him when it was intimated to me that he was a deserter. Pausing in my order, I asked him what regiment he belonged to before he enlisted in the regulars. He mentioned a New-York Volunteer regiment. I then inquired if he had been mustered out of that regiment; his reply was, that he had left,

of his own accord. I again questioned him as to whether he had received any bounty for joining the last regiment. After some hesitation, he acknowledged that he had been paid something for it. I then charged him with being a deserter, and, upon closely pressing him, he partially admitted it. Upon discovering that the fellow was more knave than fool, and had been imposing on my sympathies, I ordered him into the enclosure and forbade him to trouble me again under threats of a good kicking. Two weeks elapsed, and hearing nothing more of him, I dismissed the subject from my mind; but, one day, rumors of exchange being very rife, (700 men having been sent off,) Cols. Boyd and Hunter became alarmed lest some of the clothing should fall into the hands of the Rebels; and insisted that it should be distributed at once, as fast as possible. This I opposed, because it interfered with the order and regularity of the issuing and opened the doors to abuses and errors; besides, I could easily have kept pace with any delivery of prisoners that could have been made, without stepping out of the usual course; but, being overruled and outvoted, Lt. Col. Hunter with Lt. Col. Archer, who had been added to the committee by Capt. McRae Selph, in recognition of Col. Archer's kindness to him whilst a prisoner in our hands, were selected to assist me. Placing stands for them some little distance from my own, we proceeded to issue overcoats and such other articles as were on hand, in a manner, to my mind, savoring of the reckless. During this operation, and whilst awaiting the arrival of another squad, (having a few minutes to spare,) I sauntered around to see how my colleagues were progressing, and also to ascertain if any of those against whom I had made a black mark were taking advantage of the new comers. As I suspected, some of them were on hand; but, on seeing me approach, they slunk away into the enclosure. One, alone, remained—and he was the persistent Berry, who was standing with his back towards me, earnestly pleading with Col. Archer for various articles which he alleged had never been furnished him. Without giving the Colonel time to reply, I turned him around; and, confronting him, asked him what he wanted. Although somewhat taken aback, he

immediately commenced, in a whining tone, his well-conned tale—that he wanted this, and he wanted that. "I'll tell you what you want," said I, taking him by the collar—"You want what I promised you; and now you shall have it." With that I pushed him ahead of me, and kicked him as I walked—each foot, alternately—*three times* in all. I then took him to the gate and, putting him through it, ordered him not to come out again without my permission. Three officers were present on this occasion, of whom, however, I can recall by name but two; and, as it occurred some distance from my own stand, none of those accustomed to surround me were cognizant of it.

Some few weeks subsequent, I was informed by Lt. Bossieux that he had found a poor fellow complaining bitterly during the night of having been kicked out of his quarters by his comrades, on account of his filthy and lousy condition. Taking him out of the camp, he sent him down to the river, had him washed from head to foot; and, opening the boxes, (which were under a guard selected by myself of our own men,) gave him *every* article of clothing afresh. Unable to name the man he sent for him, and placed before me the irrepressible *Berry!* Having heard that my enemies in the prison had made capital against me, in consequence of my treatment of this man, I seized the opportunity of making him state in presence of Col. McCreery and Col. LeFavour (who, I am under the impression, accompanied me that day) his whole history; from which we learned that he had twice deserted, each time after receiving a bounty from Volunteer regiments, and had finally brought up among the "Regulars." I asked him if he recollected me; he said, "Yes." "What did I do to you?" "You kicked me." "Did I hurt you?" "Oh, no!" replied he, laughingly. "You can kick me twice as hard every day, if you will only double my rations!"

Satisfied that I had not wounded either his person or his honor, I dismissed him and never afterwards saw him. I was told, however, that he very soon disposed of his new outfit, and finally died from exposure.

In relating this incident, I have "nothing extenuated, nor set down aught in malice." It is the *only* event of my impris-

onment I would care to alter, not because the party punished did not deserve that and more, but simply because it was an undignified exhibition of temper, quite foreign to my nature, and not at all calculated to raise me in the estimation of my enemies or myself; and I regret it the more because it is the single stone on which my calumniators have erected a huge structure of cruelty, inhumanity and brutality.

As regards my conduct to the men when brought before me in my official capacity, I have neither regret nor excuse to offer. When I first came in contact with them I found many of them in an almost semi-barbarous state, lost to all discipline, subordination, and self-respect; and, as a consequence, unwilling or unable to estimate properly the favor conferred upon them by an ever-watchful Government. The most lawless and demoralized among them looked upon me as the only obstacle between them and the entire gratification of their desire to steal, plunder, and murder. Muscle and self-will were the only guides and limit they recognized, and when they met, in me, a check to their lawlessness and crime, they turned upon me with insolent defiance, or aggressive abuse. To the officials of our common enemy who surrounded me, regarding all my movements with curiosity, and witnessing my humiliation with ill-concealed merriment, these exhibitions were of the most gratifying character, giving them, as it did, such an excellent and telling text for drawing comparisons.

Unaccustomed to this flagrant disrespect, and stung to the quick by the sneers and impertinent sympathy of my foes, I determined to effect, if possible, a sudden and salutary change. As has been already stated, my issues were made from rolls carefully prepared previously. Each squad was called out separately, and the Sergeant in charge standing near me verified the man as he answered to his name. Having decided upon the course to pursue, I placed a strip of board about ten feet from my own stand, so as to enable me to scrutinize and examine the applicant, and as the squad was drawn up before me in line, I called the Sergeant aside and directed him to bring up each man, as his name was called, to that mark in a soldierly and respectful manner, with their hands out of their

pockets ; and particularly cautioned him to forbid them asking me questions until they had answered mine. Although I had a perfect right to expect and demand that each man as he presented himself before me, should make the customary salute, I did not exact it for two reasons. First, because it would have necessitated a return of the compliment thus offered, which would have rather taxed my endurance, and second, because many, if not a majority, of both officers and privates, particularly the former, would have considered me a *martinet*, and deemed me over-fastidious. As it was, many of the Sergeants added this item to the other requirements, and many well-disciplined soldiers accorded it without prompting. Another of my regulations was, that loud talking, bickering and profanity, would not be permitted in the ranks, and when it did occur, I have sent the offenders into the encampment for the day. If, in spite of the example constantly exhibited, and the caution invariably given, some obstinate or careless disciple, ignoring all precepts and suggestions, would present himself with segar in mouth, or hands in pocket, I unhesitatingly and authoritatively called his attention to the fact, and punished insolence of manner as summarily as if expressed more audibly.

That I was correct in the course I pursued, will not be denied, I think, by any but a political trickster. "Courtesy among military men is indispensable to discipline," and there are no lack of examples to show that an officer who does not respect himself and the rank he holds, will not command the respect or obtain the obedience of those beneath him. Placed as I was in an enemy's country and prison ; charged with the care and protection of a large amount of property belonging to my own Government ; surrounded every instant by unfriendly and inimical critics, ever ready to perceive and comment upon every dereliction from well-established principles of military discipline ; without the ability to enforce my orders save through the courtesy of a deadly foe, and having to deal with a band of men, some of them wholly lost to obedience or self-respect, I found my position anything but a sinecure, and my path beset by everything but roses. With certain ideas of military etiquette, routine and subordination,

implanted in my mind by long association with such officers as Irvin McDowell, Joseph Hooker, George G. Meade, John F. Reynolds, John Newton, and others of like character ; and engaged in a profession which had, from my earliest youth possessed my deepest veneration, I felt all my responsibilities, and was thoroughly cognizant of all my rights. Even had I been ignorant of the latter, the open enjoyment, on the part of our enemies, at every display of insolence, disrespect and pretended stupidity of my fellow-soldiers, would have opened the eyes of the most stolid ; whilst the half-concealed glances of approval wrung from them, as soldier after soldier appeared, each striving to excel his fellow in military smartness and disciplined respect, betrayed their recognition of our soldierly qualities, creating in the heart of every true man a glow of exultation and triumph : at least it had that effect on me ; and the compliments frequently paid by some of the best of the rebel officers stationed or visiting that post, elicited by the really excellent appearance of many of our men—*Commissary as I was*—greatly elated me. Proud of my connection with the splendid Army of the Potomac, I felt more than usual gratification when my comrades in that organization exhibited their truly martial excellence in appearance and discipline ; and although my sympathies were most moved in behalf of those true patriots, undisciplined as they were, from the Border States, expecially those from East Tennessee, I own that a respectful request sometimes extorted from me the coveted garment, when perhaps a less military bearing would have failed in impressing me with the necessity. I do love a good soldier, and have travelled many a mile to witness a superior drill.

In my intercourse with the men, apart from my official duties, I endeavored to be as kind to them as my disposition would permit, and I have the heartfelt consciousness of having, in my humble way, and with my limited means, been able to do them many acts of disinterested kindness, the relation of which would ill befit me to undertake.

With one other incident in my prison life, I hope to conclude this eventful history, already too long drawn out.

Having had a personal difficulty with a junior officer, some of his friends, joining forces with my well-known enemies, called a meeting during my absence from prison, which, although no such object was stated in the call, soon proved to be for the purpose of denouncing me. Unprepared for any such demonstration, many gentlemen, on hearing the resolutions, in which grave charges were preferred against me, demanded from the instigators and wire-pullers of the convocation, proofs of the allegations therein made; and as these were not forthcoming, they incontinently voted the whole thing down by an overwhelming majority, and adjourned the meeting *sine die*. On my return to the prison, late in the afternoon, I was the recipient of an improvised ovation, which completely mystified me, as many of the participants had always been regarded by me as unfriendly. On reaching my quarters, however, I was enlightened as to the cause of my sudden popularity, and was regaled for many a day thereafter with the recital of the fun provoked by this gathering.

In spite of the commendations of my friends, however, I could not but feel indignant at this cowardly attempt to injure me; and, with a view to hold the parties to a strict accountability hereafter, I wrote to the master-spirit of the affair —a Capt. McKee, from Kentucky, asking in the most courteous terms a copy of the Preamble and Resolutions read by him on the occasion. To this he made so equivocating a reply and exhibited so contemptible a spirit that I felt constrained to brand him as a slanderer and poltroon, and there the matter ended as far as he was concerned. A day or two afterwards, Col. Powell, (now Brigadier-General,) availing himself of remarks made by me publicly—that I would answer any question in reference to my conduct, in or out of the prison respectfully presented to me—called at my quarters and, after a conference of nearly three hours in duration, thanked me for my frankness and openly avowed his complete satisfaction with my explanations. Anxious to give as many officers as desired it an opportunity to converse freely with the men on the Island, I asked and obtained permission from Major Turner to take with me, daily, *two* officers, instead of one; and

thus I repaid the malice of my enemies, who crushed and defeated in every movement, allowed me to remain quiet during the rest of my imprisonment. Shortly after this event, the time for the completion of Col. Rose's tunnel approaching, I was called upon by Major McDanald, of the 101st Ohio, who, after introducing himself, being a perfect stranger to me, asked if I had not publicly stated that I would lend money to any officer proposing to make his escape. This I affirmed, with the explanation, that, at the time specified I had more means at my command, and desired to effect a certain result, viz: conveying intelligence to my government of the reinforcement of Bragg's army by Longstreet. At the moment then in question I was not so well stocked with money, and declined especially robbing myself for the purpose of gorging the guard, as Streight and Ely had done with such marked results—the latter having paid a hundred dollars (greenbacks) for the pleasure of "climbing down" a rope, and ten dollars for the privilege of climbing up again! Disclaiming any such intention, and satisfying me that the mode of exit was practicable and novel, I promised to raise a certain sum, which he could rely upon. A day or two after, Major Henry, of the 5th Ohio Cavalry, and one of the speakers at the first meeting against me, also approached me on the same errand, with the same result, and finally Lt. W. F. Randolph, a Regular officer, to whom I gave my last dollar. Of these gentlemen, two were fortunate enough to succeed in their attempts, whilst the third, Major Henry, was unluckily recaptured. Others applied to me for funds for the same purpose, but having exhausted my stock, I had recourse to my store of luxuries and provisions, and even necessaries, among which I number a hatchet and a bottle of excellent brandy, both of which, as I afterwards learned, were of incalculable value.

On the morning of the 7th of March I was sent to the office, and ordered to get ready to leave for—home. In two hours I was to be ever more a free man. So unexpected, and so startling the news; so varied and so numerous the hopes and expectations that, for a few moments, I was unable to express my feelings, and was only reminded of my personality

by the Major humorously asking me "if I was sorry to leave him?" The warmth of my reply was more amusing than complimentary, and after receiving his congratulations I returned to my quarters to announce the glad tidings. Overwhelmed with joy every trace of bitterness faded from my heart, and there was not a man in that building, including Atwood, McKee, *et id omne genus*, that I would not gladly have shaken hands with, and forgiven every injury, in all sincerity. On every side I met pleasant faces and hearty congratulations, each one hoping his turn would come next, and had I been possessed of a million instead of the few dollars I had obtained, I would cheerfully have dispensed it all. As it was, everything of the slightest value not absolutely indispensable to my comfort, from a suit of clothes to a soda cracker, was distributed among my friends and messmates; and passing through the lines of comrades drawn up to bid me "God-speed," I found both hands inadequate to the task of giving "a last shake." With nothing but a haversack, and that but meagrely fitted, I experienced but little delay in passing my examinations, and emerged among the first into the free air. On our way down the river on the contemptible little craft furnished by the Confederacy, whilst intoxicated with joy, mingled with regret that there were not more with us, I was startled from my delicious dreamings by hearing that my intense and unscrupulous enemy Atwood, had been left behind,—and, more startling still,—was told that he had charged me with being the cause of it—as if anything but a snake could hold venom at such a moment. Unconscious as I was, up to that instant, that he was not on board,—our party having been separated on reaching the vessel,—I could hardly believe my own ears, as I was confident I had seen him all ready to be examined just as I stepped from the hall. Somewhat dampened in my exuberance by this ill-timed slander, I was proportionately rejoiced to hear from Capt. Cockman and Capt Johnson the true version of his return—they being selected by the Surgeon of the hospital, owing to their sickness, in place of Atwood and my old friend Douglass, whose names happening to be at the head of the list of Captains, were stricken off by

Major Turner himself, at the last moment. One week afterwards they were both released, and I only mention the circumstance to show the fiendish spirit of this cowardly creature, who fastened with devilish hate on every incident that could, by misrepresentation or downright falsification, be laid to my account.

On reaching Washington, I was still more disagreeably surprised to hear from Gen. Meade that charges seriously reflecting on my honor and loyalty had been made, by Col. Streight and others, to the Honorable Secretary of War, who was exceedingly angered at me in consequence. Repairing immediately to the War Department, I saw Gen. Canby, who assured me that he had no knowledge of such charges. I then called on Major-Gen. Hitchcock, and after two hours' conversation with him on other subjects, learned also from him that nothing of the kind had been brought to his notice. Convinced that there must be some error in the matter, I was on the point of leaving for home when I received a note from Col. Hoffman, Commissary-General of Prisoners, requesting me to call at his office. I did so, and was informed that I must consider myself under arrest, and remain in my hotel until the matter could be investigated. On the next day, my friend Gen. Wadsworth, indignant at the treatment imposed upon me, called on Mr. Stanton, and in the most energetic manner protested against it. The day following, I wrote to Mr. Stanton, requesting a Court of Inquiry, and claiming the right to be considered and treated as an innocent man until tried and proven otherwise. To this the only answer was an order releasing me from arrest, and permitting me to visit my family and home, which I was not to leave until so directed, holding myself ready to meet any charges that *might* be brought against me by any officer, a fellow prisoner of war with me in Richmond. Two months had nearly elapsed, when, finding myself exchanged, I wrote to the Adjutant-General again, requesting an immediate trial, or assignment to duty. To this the only reply was a summary dismissal from the service, notice of which was received through the public papers. I immediately repaired to Washington, and endeavored to see the

President. Failing in this, owing to the pressure of public business, I returned home, and in October again visited the Capitol, where I remained until I effected my object, by being ordered to appear before your honorable Commission, where I learned for the first time the nature of the charges and the names of my accusers.

## THE DEFENCE.

Such, upon my honor as a gentleman and a soldier, is the honest record of my experiences as a prisoner of War. Let me now attempt a brief examination of the charges against me.

And, first, a word or two as to my accusers. Why are Gen. Dow and Corporal Taylor thus arraigned against me?

It is hard for one so falsely and treacherously assailed as I have been by these men, to restrain his honest indignation; but I shall abstain from all invective, and respectfully refer your Honorable Commission to the evidence as to the motives which have made these persons my bitter enemies.

Gen. Dow sufficiently discloses the cause of his animosity to me in his own letter. He states: "After my protest to Gen. Winder against the cruel treatment of my soldiers at Belle Isle, I was not permitted to visit them any more, and the business of distributing the clothing to the soldiers—all of which was sent to me—was put into his hands." And again, "The U. S. Sanitary Commission sent a great quantity of supplies to me for distribution, but the Rebels put them into the hands of Col. SANDERSON."

The General here makes two positive misstatements; for it is not true that the Sanitary supplies were ever placed in my hands for distribution, or that I had at any time a personal control over them; nor did I immediately succeed him in the business of distributing the U. S. clothing as he implies in his letter, as it is clearly and indisputably shown that other officers took his place and had charge for weeks before I was appointed. But, aside from these misstatements, we reach the cause of his choler.

To be ousted from his high position by Rebel authority; superseded by officers of inferior rank, and the great honors he so ostentatiously flaunted, thus suddenly stripped from him, were ample causes for any display of venom, and sufficient to embitter him against any successor, but especially one who had dared to speak lightly of his ability, and objected to his companionship. It is not so stated in the testimony presented because I deemed it almost too puerile to mention in my queries to the parties cognizant of the fact, but I can personally relate another and a secret motive for this gentleman's antagonism to me, which, although of the pettiest nature, is strongly characteristic of my foe. After the incident referred to on page —— of my narrative, an officer whose name has passed from my memory, approached Col. Tilden and myself and stated that General Neal Dow was daily expected to arrive from Mobile, and that he would then be the ranking officer, and as *we had the best mess* in the prison, he suggested the propriety of inviting him to join us. To this I quickly objected on the ground "that Neal Dow, in my opinion, was neither a soldier nor a gentleman; and for my part I declined all association or companionship with him, especially as his rank would seemingly entitle him to immunity from cooking and cleaning, and I did'nt care to do the dirty work of any man be his rank never so high." Laboring under the disadvantage of placing before you only just such testimony as my comrades may choose to furnish, it is impossible for me to prove that this remark ever came to his ears; but, were I permitted to examine certain gentlemen under oath, among them General Dow himself, I entertain but little doubt of my ability to substantiate my statement. At all events, as he says, and I concur in, "there was no intercourse between us, although our quarters were close together."

As to the causes of General Dow's removal by the Confederates, I do not propose to examine or criticise them. Every officer that visited the Island, unite in branding the treatment of our men as brutal, inhuman and savage, and no one felt that more keenly than I did; but that it was politic or wise so to characterize the conduct of our jailors in a paper evi-

dently intended to produce an amelioration of that treatment, is at least debatable. Having no shortcomings to gloss over, no suspicious circumstances to obscure, and no political aspirations to nurture, I did not deem it necessary to couch my requests in threatening terms, nor ventilate my patriotism in the "spread eagle" fashion. When I asked a favor for my suffering comrades, I plead for it with tears in my eyes, and when I protested, as my fellow-officers have testified, I did it in a manly and frank manner. That mine was the better method is evidenced by the statement of the men who swear that after my visits to the Island ceased, their ration was reduced.

The enmity of Corporal Taylor is of a more legitimate character, and is based on recognized grounds. Acting for a time as an issuing Clerk he was detected in the act of appropriating certain articles of clothing without permission, and punished by a return to the encampment, and the refusal on my part to allow him to draw anything from the general stock. Of course this enraged him.

"No thief e'er felt the halter draw.
With good opinion of the law!"

and doubtless Mr. Corporal Taylor feels that he is a much aggrieved individual, and will spare no effort to impress me with the fact, urging at the moment, if I recollect aright, that he wanted the articles, and didn't consider it stealing to take them. I dissented, hence his woe.

So much for the *animus;* let us now examine the nature of their charges.

And at this point, let me call the attention of your Honorable Commission to the ingenious and artfully worded letter of General Dow. The writer *asserts nothing*, as of his own knowledge, but *expresses* his *convictions* and his *thoughts*, throwing upon *other* shoulders the burden of this most foul accusation. To crush and ruin a brother officer, he weaves a cunningly devised tissue of vague charges upon *hearsay* testimony. The evidence, as it stands, seems insufficient to convict of the smallest offence; how much less to condemn me to a future of shame worse than death itself.

But I desire to take no exception, even to this hearsay testimony;

> "What I did, I did in honor,
> Led by the impartial conduct of my soul;
> And never shall you see that I will beg
> If truth and upright innocency fail me."

Fortunately for me, the abundant and overwhelming testimony,—entirely voluntary, as you know,—of those of my fellow prisoners whom I have been able to reach, enables me to dispense with any such technical plea. I ought to add here that I have addressed over 150 letters to my brother officers, but many of them being in Sherman's and Thomas' armies, whilst others are entirely out of the service, leaving no clue to their whereabouts, their replies have not yet reached me, although in some cases, I have written as often as three times to different points. Should your Honorable Commission, however, desire further testimony, or require greater elucidation of any point, I would respectfully ask to be permitted to add these statements as they are received.

These charges which, as you will observe, are made neither *on honor* nor *on oath*, may be placed under four heads, viz. :—

1st. Disloyalty.

2d. Cruelty to Federal Prisoners.

3d. Misappropriation of stores sent by the Government or by the U. S. Sanitary Commission.

4th. Disclosure of a plot to escape.

1st. Disloyalty—

In support of this charge, Gen. Dow offers the following proof:—

"The conviction among the officers generally was, that he was disloyal, had little or no sympathy with our cause, but much for the Rebels. On that point I *think* Col. Streight is particularly informed."

To this charge I respectfully oppose the following frank and full statement of my past military career.

At the commencement of this conflict, I was known as an

"Old Line Whig," very conservative in my ideas, and somewhat Pro-Slavery in my proclivities. Holding a lucrative and confidential position in the New-York Hotel, (celebrated as the sojourning place of the Southerners,) all my associations tended to strengthen these sentiments; but, when that "little cloud no bigger than a man's hand" appeared on the horizon—when a minor section threatened the disruption of a great Republic—and countless hordes arrayed themselves against one little band of heroes in Fort Sumpter—my Southern sympathy and my conservative views melted into thin air, and I felt that the time had come for every true man to range himself openly under the banner of Freedom and Unity, or cling to Despotism and Slavery. Without an instant's hesitation, I made my choice. At the first call for men and money, I gave all of both at my command. Endorsed unanimously by the Union Defence Committee, and other prominent citizens of my State, I sought employment in the Subsistence Department; and was one of *four* bidders for the first batch of Treasury notes. At this moment my employer, hearing of my motions, ingeniously fastened a quarrel on me; and, at one day's notice, dismissed me from his establishment. As my connection with this suspected resort has been quoted by those high in authority to my disadvantage, I embody herewith certain publications relating thereto.

On the 29th May, 1861, (a few days after my dismissal,) there appeared in the New-York *Tribune* the following paragraph:—

"AN AMERICAN SOYER."

"We learn that Mr. JAMES M. SANDERSON, who has been for several years the Steward and purveyor of the New-York Hotel, has been dismissed from his place on account of his Union sentiments, and that he intends doing for our own Army what Soyer did for the British troops in the Crimea—teach them how to preserve their lives by cooking their food properly. Mr. SANDERSON is both a scientific and practical cook, and comprehends the principles of the *cuisine* as well perhaps as any man who has written upon the subject, from Vatel to Careme. If he were to go upon a culinary campaign

among our troops, he might render them most important services by a few simple practical directions, as well as be the means of saving some thousands of dollars to the Commissariat. If it be true that beans kill more of our men than bullets, a head Cook is of more importance to our Army than a head Surgeon. It will be a great blessing to the Country if the services of so capable a man as Mr. SANDERSON could be secured for this purpose."

On the following morning there appeared, in the same paper,

"A CARD FROM MR. H. CRANSTON."

"*To the Editor of the Tribune:*

"SIR,—I was supprised to learn from your paper of this morning's issue, that JAMES M. SANDERSON, "who has been for some years steward and purveyor of the N. Y. Hotel, has been dismissed from his place on account of his Union sentiments." I have only to say in answer to this statement, that I have had no conversation with Mr. SANDERSON on the subject of politics, and that my reasons for dismissing him have nothing whatever to do with his Union sentiments, or any other sentiments, as Mr. SANDERSON well knows. The private opinions of my clerks are matters with which I have neither the right nor the disposition to interfere. It is only necessary for them to perform their respective duties, as I endeavor to perform mine, not only to my guests but to my employees and my country; and I claim the right to engage and to discharge men without being subjected to newspaper misrepresentations."

"HIRAM CRANSTON.

"N. Y. Hotel, May 29, 1831."

To this I made the subjoined response:

"A REPLY TO MR. H. CRANSTON.

"*To the Editor of the N. Y. Tribune:*

SIR,—I did not write the article in your journal headed 'An American Soyer,' nor see it until after its issue, but, to the best of my belief, it is substantially correct.

"In Mr. Hiram Cranston's answer thereto he makes some grave misstatements. He says that he had had no conversation with Mr. SANDERSON on the subject of politics. He has had such a conversation within the past two weeks, and as bitter a discussion as our relative positions would permit. He asserts "that he performs his duty to his country." True, he

commits no overt act of treason, for which the wholesome dread of a traitor's doom may in some degree account.

"As to my making arrangements of a business character,—the implied cause in his note of dismissal,—I do confess it. Self respect would not permit me to hold any position *under* Mr. Cranston, after the expiration of the term agreed upon—the 1st of August proximo; and I do also confess that I have been, and am still, endeavoring to obtain an honorable position under that Government and that flag which his traitorous confederates are striving to subvert and trample upon.

"Very respectfully yours,

"JAMES M. SANDERSON.

"PIERREPONT HOUSE, Brooklyn,
"May 30th, 1861."

This shot proving too much for my antagonist, he abandoned the public prints, and sought revenge by preferring charges against me in a Masonic Lodge, of which we were both members. With my resolution unchanged, and in hopes that my peculiar speciality as a gastronomist might prove servicable in preserving life, I repaired to the Capitol, and, under the auspices of the Sanitary Commission, sought to introduce a plan for teaching the soldiers how to cook their rations. Unsuccessful in my efforts to bring it to the favorable notice of the then Secretary of War, I returned to New-York, and at the request of the principal members of the Sanitary Commission, visited Albany, and disclosed my plan to his Excellency E. D. Morgan, then Governor of the State, and his Surgeon-in-Chief. My ideas being approved by the latter, I was authorized by the former to return to Washington, and test, in some of the New-York regiments, their practicability. Two weeks sufficing to prove this, I condensed as briefly as possible the details of my plan, and placed them before the leading Regular and Volunteer officers, by whom they were unanimously recommended. With these endorsements, I knocked loudly and persistently at the doors of Congress, but as all was in confusion and dismay, there as well as elsewhere, I had my labor for my pains; and out of heart and out of funds, turned my face homeward. Before leaving the city, however, I applied at the War Department for the papers de-

posited there, advocating my appointment as commissary. On learning my object, Mr. Cameron, knowing my antecedents, ordered my appointment to be made out. On calling the next day, I was informed that no vacancy existed in the coveted department. Somewhat disgusted at this intelligence, I again started for home, determined to take a hand in the fight even on my own hook. On making my intentions known to the Hon. Henry Wilson, he immediately offered me the position of Quartermaster of his new regiment—the Twenty-second Massachusetts—then about to be recruited. This I instantly accepted, and after a brief sojourn at home, presented myself at the city of Boston, ready for duty. Whilst there, I received notice of my appointment as Commissary, but feeling some pride in the organization to which I had been, though for a short time, attached, I asked and obtained permission to remain with it until ready to leave for the front. On the 20th October, having comfortably located the regiment, in its first camp on Hall's Hill, Va., I reported for duty to the Subsistence Department, and was assigned to the staff of the brave and lamented Wadsworth, who had applied for me as soon as he heard of my appointment. With him I remained until he was transferred to the Military Governorship of the Defences of Washington. During that winter, finding my official duties by no means onerous, I filled up my leisure time by putting into form my experiences in camp cooking, which I presented to the Government, by whom it was published and distributed everywhere.

After Gen. Wadsworth's departure, I was selected by Maj. Gen. McDowell, as Chief Commissary of the First Corps, which position I retained to the day of its disbandment. In July, 1862, I was promoted, at the personal solicitation of my Commanding General, to the rank of Major and Additional Aid-de-Camp; and, in the following January, was made Lieut. Colonel, at the request of my then Commander, Major-General John F. Reynolds. Although as a Commissary, strictly speaking, I was a non-combatant, I always claimed the right, by virtue of my commission as Major to act as Aid on the field of battle; and am proud to say that I have never been absent

from any engagement in which my General took part, and never hesitated to go where he led or ordered me. In this way I participated in the battle of Cedar Mountain, the Banks of the Rappahannock, and the battles of Manassas and Second Bull Run, under General McDowell; South Mountain and Antietam, under General Hooker; Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg, under Generals Reynolds and Newton. If Brigadier-General Neal Dow can present a better record or show more devotion to *our* cause, I am quite sure *his* friends would be pleased to see it; and, if I have exhibited no sympathy with the Union cause, I should be glad to learn *how* it is to be done. The second specification of this most irregular charge is thus speciously worded :—

"My conviction was that Col. SANDERSON had no sympathy with the Union cause. His conversation, so far as I knew of it, indicated a decided hostility to the Administration and its measures; and certainly he manifested no kindly feeling towards our soldiers, who were suffering so much in their Country's service."

For once, my venerable antagonist ventures to break from the guardianship of his friends, Streight and Atwood, and state something of his own knowledge, limited though it be even by his own showing. But my accuser has thus plunged into a dilemma, from which no witness can rescue him. Out of the large amount of testimony presented to your Honorable Commission herewith, every officer that touches the subject at all tells you most decidedly the contrary. From the highest to the lowest, on one point at least, they are emphatic and unanimous, and that is, that I was not only an earnest upholder of the Administration and the Government, but also a most consistent advocate of *all* its measures, while in prison.

But, supposing the allegation of the subtle politician was strictly true—allowing that I was an opponent of the Administration, I would respectfully ask, When did that become a crime in the United States? I frankly acknowledge that I did not vote for Abraham Lincoln in the Presidential election of 1860. Relying on my rights as an American citizen; entitled by birth and residence to all the privileges incident thereto—the right of franchise, freedom of opinion, and lib-

erty of speech ; and hardly prepared to believe the principles of the Republican party as most conducive to the prosperity and perpetuity of the country, I gave my support to Stephen A. Douglas, being the first and only time I ever voted a Democratic ticket. But when I found that a section of that organization declared that the will of the majority, as manifested by Mr. Lincoln's election, should not be respected, I did not hesitate an instant in repudiating such heresies or in abandoning such a party. I do not blush at making this admission, nor do I take credit for having, at the recent election, joined the governing party, as I sincerely belive it will not influence the judgment of this Honorable Commission one iota. With the alternatives presented at this crisis, the proper course to me appeared clear; for, whilst I am without the hope of finding here below perfection either in party or partisan, I am content to accept any man as the banner-bearer of my political principles, whose antecedents and actions do not give the lie to his professions ; and, as I shall never be an applicant for governmental patronage, it is a matter of perfect indifference whether the party in power is cognizant of my proclivities or not. For the present Chief Magistrate I have no particular predilection and, should occasion require, would vote against him to-morrow, if any other man of the same party should be found more fitting or available. As none such was presented to me, I had no choice; and, therefore, yielded to the situation. This much I say, to show that I seek no favor on account of my political preferences or principles. I am, fortunately, no bigoted politician nor blatant partisan ; and my services as an advocate are not to be secured by hopes of office or lust of power—

> "I care for measures more than men, but think
> Some little may depend upon the men ;
> Something in fires depends upon the grate."

A volunteer in this conflict, I only asked to be placed where I could do most service, and whatever promotion I may have attained has resulted from the manner in which I have performed that service. Of the truth of this my Commanders

and associates offer ample testimony, rendering any remarks from me unnecessary.

As regards my "manifesting no kindly feeling towards our soldiers who were suffering so much in their country's services," I eagerly join issue with my aged accuser, and would gladly match him, could I meet him face to face before your Honorable Commission, or any other tribunal—act to act or result to result—whether in Libby Prison or on Belle Island. To be sure, I made no "high-falutin" speeches, nor any attempt to fill empty bellies with flowery promises; neither did I preach impossible virtues for impracticable vices; but, if imbuing men with self-respect, organizing resistance to trained outrages, exercising a wise and strict impartiality in my official duties, restraining the vicious and brutal, visiting the sick and needy, and mitigating to the extent of my power, the rigor and severity of their keepers, are to be counted as indices of kindly feeling, I will proudly exhibit my record against any man in that prison from Atwood to Dow, including Streight.

As a feeble *addendum* to this charge of Dow's, I would add the statement of his humble coadjutor, Corporal Taylor, who adds, *en passant*, "that he saw Col. SANDERSON very intimate with some of the Rebel officers, and appeared to have private conversations with them, but does not know what passed upon those occasions." My answer to this charge, other than a reference to the testimony of very nearly every witness, is simple and brief. Extending to me the courtesy of gentlemen, I did not feel called upon to repel the politenesses of my keepers, or destroy my influence for good by an unnecessary or impolitic coolness. Intimate with Southern peculiarities, I knew that a courteous demeanor and gentlemanly address carried much weight with them, and as I had everything to gain and nothing to lose by such conduct, I did not care to depart from my usual manner of meeting strangers, especially as I did not dream that my loyalty required Corporal Taylor's stamp to prevent its being deemed counterfeit. That I did not take this fellow into my confidence, and make him a participant in my private conversations, arises, possibly, from

some "old-fogy" ideas as to the fitness of things, and a distinction between an officer and his subordinates. I would respectfully suggest, however, that that intimacy could not have been of a very secret character which was carried on in open air, within the scope of a thousand prying eyes.

The second charge against me is, "Cruelty to Federal prisoners." This accusation, I confess, pains me as greatly as it astonishes. From my earliest manhood accustomed to command, with the right to punish, and the power to reward, I did not find, on entering the army, that awkwardness in dealing with those under me so incident to those unused to control others. For many years at the head of a large hotel, where system was a necessity and obedience obligatory, I have always been regarded as strict, but just, as severe but impartial, ever ready to recognize and reward merit, and equally prepared to resent impertinence or disrespect, and punish disobedience or laxity. Were it necessary, I could bring a thousand testimonials from my former employees, both black and white, but few of whom would speak of me as other than kind and merciful. Striving through life "to do unto others as I would have them do unto me," I would not strike an enemy when down, or hold malice against any one confessing his fault. I have never taken the life of any living thing save a rat or a fly, and if there is any cruelty in my character or composition it has been but lately developed. Hasty and passionate, I know myself to be, but unjust or brutal—*never!* Emphatic in my language, and strong in my denunciations under a feeling of wrong or injustice, I have, nevertheless, schooled myself of late years to avoid, almost entirely, profane or vulgar expressions, judge then of my astonishment on learning, through Brigadier General Neal Dow, that in my intercourse with our soldiers I was "always harsh and cruel," and accosted them habitually "with oaths, curses and bitter revilings," causing many of them "to be bucked and gagged" *for what?* From all I can gather, after scrutinizing the various specifications under this head, it was simply because these poor fellows applied to me for clothing. Pray, for what else was I there? If the distribution of these articles was so pain-

ful why did I not retire from the dreadful task or call upon one or more of my colleagues to aid me? I was not obliged to retain the position one instant longer than was agreeable, nor would my brother officers in that Committee have permitted me to exercise the power invested in me, had my barbarities been so gross or so patent as my enemy would have you believe? Cols. Boyd, Hunter, Von Schrader and Archer, are not only gentlemen but loyal and brave men, and I cannot believe nor dare Neal Dow say, that they would passively have submitted to such cruelty on my part, or have consented to serve in any capacity with such a brute. With them my intercourse was constant, confiding and intimate, and I have yet to hear from any of them a word of condemnation or rebuke, although we had frequent discussions and differences as to our official duties and policy. *If* these gentlemen were as cognizant of my misconduct, as Neal Dow would imply, I would unhesitatingly brand them as cowards and base accomplices in acts more reprehensible than those of our accursed foe—than Winder himself.

And may I not, very pertinently, ask here why Brigadier General Neal Dow *himself*, supported by his high rank, fortified by his irrepressible philanthropy, and never-to-be-too-loudly vaunted patriotism, and backed by a thousand loyal men; why did not *he* arrest me in this uninterrupted course of cruelty and inhumanity? "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," and with my outspoken and persistent advocacy of the doctrine of "respect for rank," he had every assurance that I would hear, if I did not heed; that I would answer, if I did not obey. Why not then have sought by protests and by complaint to have placed some limit to my unequalled barbarity, my inexcusable crime?

Thus much for generalities.

Let me now examine in detail:

And first on the record comes my unfortunate act of kicking Berry. This affair I have already recounted at great length, and will only refer to it to repeat my acknowledgements of its error, and express my deep regret at its occurrence, and say in all sincerity that

"If hearty sorrow
Be a sufficient ransom for offence,
I tender it here."

The next item is as follows :—

"One poor fellow, barefooted, asked for shoes; and received curses instead—Capt. Atwood saw this. The next day but one, Capt. Atwood saw the same man brought out in a blanket, with his feet badly frozen; I think, he suffered amputation."

To answer this charge, I freely aver I find my knowledge of language too weak or my feelings too strong. To have concocted such a tale demanded a vindictiveness of hate and a fertility of imagination only to be found in the darkest ages and the warmest clime; and when I characterized the nature of the charges against me in my letters to my friends, "as comprising every crime from *petty larceny* to *constructive murder*," I claim to be strictly within the limits of truth. With the knowledge that death must inevitably await the victim of such an operation, under the then existing scarcity of proper remedies in Richmond, General Neal Dow, in one single line, only excelled the Parthian by dipping his pointed barb in thrice distilled poison. He *may* be a philanthropist; he may even be honest, as the world goes; but, if he be a Christian, I beseech him to turn to the Decalogue, and treasure up that sacred command, "*Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.*"

Fortunately for me, both time and testimony flatly contradict this most foul accusation.

1st. Sergeant Toland swears that I never refused shoes to a barefooted man, except for causes which he enumerates.

2d. Captain Atwood having ceased to visit Belle Island, on or before the 20th of December, and all the testimony concurring that the first cold night did not occur until Christmas eve, four days after, Capt. Atwood's view of this unfortunate man must have been in his own diseased imagination.

3d. Those men who surrounded me, and would have been

most likely to have known the truth of such a statement, unite in declaring that they never heard of such an incident.

As I cannot believe that your Honorable Commission can regard this artfully contrived accusation in any other light than I do, I will not occupy your time by further argument, but will proceed to the next in order.

"His intercourse with the soldiers, was always with oaths, and curses, and bitter revilings. Many of these poor fellows he caused to be bucked and gagged. And this to half-starved and half-frozen men who had left friends, business, and comfortable homes. in some cases luxurious homes, to help save their country from being blotted out from the map of Nations. Many of these men were educated gentlemen."

Next to the denial of my utterance of disloyal sentiments, either by condemning my own Government, or upholding that of our enemy, no contradiction is so emphatic or so unanimous as that which refers to my using profane, vulgar, or abusive language. Capt. Charlier, a high-toned, polished Frenchman, educated in the best French Theological Colleges, and about to take holy orders, when news of this rebellion reaching him in Italy, induced him to forego the sacred calling to engage in one almost as holy, tells you in his statement that, "Unless I except the use of the word "damn," I never heard Lt.-Col. SANDERSON make use of profane or vulgar language. He was always refined in his intercourse with me, or with others in my presence. *I even thought him religiously inclined.*" To appreciate at its full value, this temperate but strongly worded evidence, your Honorable Commission should see the deponent as I have seen him, rebuking in firm but courteous terms the profane and beastly horde that oftimes made night hideous with their scurrility and cursing. In words of fire I have heard him denounce the scoffer and the infidel, and send them sneaking, silently, into the recesses of their own corrupt heart for refuge and sympathy, drawing forth by his manly and just indignation the spontaneous applause of every proper-man. Such words from such a man carried a weight irresist-

ible to the offender, and produced an effect which was gratefully acknowledged by the better class among us. That such a man should feel justified in such praise of me, would fully repay for any epithets of abuse heaped upon me by all the spurious philanthropists of the age, were they ten times more active than Neal Dow. Living near me, conversing with me almost hourly, and judging me by such criterions as his skilled judgment would decide, I ask no better testimony, and can offer none.

Why General Dow should have persisted in fastening upon me this unnecessary and ungentlemanly vice, of habitual profanity, I am unable to comprehend, except that it aided him in strengthening an otherwise impoverished case, and served to round his sentences. Of all that company, he alone, who "had no intercourse with me," has been able to hear these horrible imprecations, these soul-killing profanities. Even Corp'l Taylor ignores them, and contents himself with characterizing my words as of a sportive nature.

That I caused some men to be bucked is most true. Why I did so has already been stated, and so far from apologizing for it, I ask your applause. Every account that has yet been published, every witness from among the enlisted men themselves, whether on Belle Isle or Andersonville, tell you of that band of organized villains, of which no other gathering or community could produce a parallel. Unrestrained by any law human or divine; unfettered by any principle of honor or patriotism; unterrified by the resistance of the vigorous or the groans of the weak; unmoved by imprecations or prayers; they prowled through the encampment like human vampires, sucking the life-blood of their associates, and intent only on plunder and rapine. Such men I *bucked*. I could only punish them homeopathically; their comrades, when vested with the power, treated them more allopathically—they hung them! Had Gen. Neal Dow been called upon, he would have tried moral suasion, or made a speech to them: which would *then* have been considered *more* cruel—*He or I?* Are these the men, "some of them educated gentlemen, who had left friends, business, and homes—in some cases, luxurious homes,"

for whom you are asked to shed your tears? Jail-birds, bounty-jumpers, and assassins!

"On one occasion, (a cold day,) a squad of men, half starved, and pinched with cold, came out for clothes. At the head of the line, to be served first, was a soldier—curled up and shivering—his hands in his poor apologies for pockets. With oaths and curses, SANDERSON demanded, why he did not take the position of a soldier; and drove the poor wretch to the tail of the line—to wait a long hour or two, as a punishment."

In corroboration of this, we find in Corp. Taylor's statement the following:—

"Have seen Col. SANDERSON standing with Rebel officers when some of the Union prisoners would approach with their hands in their pockets, in rags and tatters; and Col. SANDERSON, instead of commiserating their situation, would seem to make sport of them, and order them to take their hands out of their pockets."

These two paragraphs may be included under one Specification; and, as the offence charged is the same, I will consider it as an unity. As I have already stated, the men were brought out before me in squads, rarely exceeding sixty or seventy. Their names having been already enrolled, it was not at all unlikely that the first called would be found at the end of the line instead of the head. As every one passed up in front, he received the usual caution to "take his hands out of his pockets, and assume the position of a soldier." Having the accurate state of his wardrobe recorded opposite to his name, it required hardly half a minute to issue the order for the necessary articles; and, as Brig. Gen. Powell assures you, that "he could not but admire the prompt and systematic manner" in which I performed this business, you must take it for granted that he at least found no fault with that portion of my conduct. With eight thousand men awaiting my motions, I was forced to be brief and decisive; and at no time was a single squad before me "a long hour or two," or in fact ever over half an hour. But, in the very midst of my duties, I never lost sight of my position, nor permitted willful disrespect to pass unnoticed. Having been informed of their duty, nothing but absolute

deafness could justify, or positive obstinacy account for a non-compliance. An enlisted man, able to drag himself into the presence of a commissioned officer, under any plea whatever, is quite strong enough to stand in his presence in the position of a soldier. When they were brought before me by the aid of others, I waived form and ceremony and attended to them at once; but to a man able to walk unsupported, I have yet to learn that keeping his hands in his pockets is either an aid or a curative. Nor do I recognize any lawful order of a superior as implying degradation, in its performance, to the inferior. If that order is lawful, it is proper; and the very first section of the first article of the Army Regulations expressly requires that "all inferiors should obey such orders strictly, and execute them with alacrity and good faith." But says my "warranted" accuser, "Col. SANDERSON would use harsh language towards them." When once convinced that a man could hear an order, his refusal to obey it was an insult which I resented in anything but a deprecatory tone and subdued manner; and the very fact of my being in the presence of an enemy would have incited me to show him that, if the private forgot his duty, the officer did not: and so Corp. Taylor discovered at a very early stage of his acquaintance with me. There are officers prone to implore men to do their duty, and I have even witnessed some exercising that method; but, I frankly confess that the only feeling I was inspired with, was a desire to reverse their positions, quite satisfied that I should have the right man in the right place.

"Occasionally," says Corp. Taylor, "a man or so would come out and ask for particular articles; and I have heard Col. SANDERSON repeatedly use harsh language towards them and order them away, calling them 'dirty fellows.'"

The very fact of a man coming out occasionally to ask for a particular article, was a disobedience of orders and in direct conflict with system and discipline. Laying out the work for each day, I only carried with me the papers necessary for that work; and, unless a man was in very great need, or suffering from great debility, no partiality could justly be shown with

out producing inextricable confusion; and so they were informed. If persistent in their application, effectual means were taken to remove the annoyance. As to my calling some of them "dirty fellows," I cannot deny it; and I regretted then as now the necessity for such an epithet; but, as they were the exception to the general rule and were literally entitled to the designation, without, in my opinion, a legitimate cause for their filthiness, I do not offer any apology for the appellation, excepting that they were *very* dirty fellows, and alike a disgrace to themselves and a nuisance to their comrades. Had there been no appliances for cleanliness, my reproaches would have been unjust; but, with a broad river laving the very confines of their camp, to which they had convenient and frequent access, there was no justification in their presenting themselves before me in a condition of beastly filth. That some men are inherently dirty admits of no denial; hence that section of Article 13, Rev. Army Reg. referring thereto. Even among the commissioned officers in Libby, there were those among us especially designated by the title of "Dirty This," or "Dirty That."

After declaring that he had heard me order some of the men to be bucked, Corporal Taylor proceeds to say: "The reason why he ordered them bucked, *as he supposes*, was, that they had sold some of their clothing for the purpose of obtaining food." That any man may sell his blanket for subsistence, under an extreme pressure of hunger, I can readily understand, but that his comrades should suffer on account of his improvidence, I am not prepared to admit. Had my stock been unlimited, the choice between food and raiment might have entered into my calculations, but with the materials placed at my disposal, no such choice was permitted me; and as this abuse had grown to great proportions, the Corporal himself admitting that "a considerable number of the Rebel guard were clothed in the United States clothing, much of which was obtained from the Union soldiers." I felt it was my duty to put a stop to it in some way, especially as those who sold their own clothing did not hesitate to steal from their comrades when opportunity presented; and although I punished only

the most flagrant cases brought to my notice, I am, nevertheless, denounced as a tyrant by this most patriotic soldier.

But it was not all exchanged by the men, says this veracious witness, for "he saw Col. SANDERSON give some of it away to the Rebels," especially an over-coat to one man. This statement is "a lie out of the whole cloth," and is directly contradicted both by Mr. Toland and Mr. Saurman, the only clerks I have thus far been able to reach.

The great poet tells us,

> "*That* in the captain's but a choleric word,
> "*Which* in the soldier is flat blasphemy,"

but, in these leveling times, they would have us proclaim. "*That* a virtue in the private rank, *which* in the officer is gross treason." The soldier may clothe the whole Rebel guard without reproach, but his superior must not even exchange good words, lest his loyalty be questioned. For my own part, I can recollect of no incident on which such a charge could be based, unless some one of the Rebel non-commissioned officers may have been permitted to change a coat already purchased from some of our men. But even this is mere supposition on my part, and somewhat improbable, as many of the guard were punished at my instance, for carrying on this traffic, which at one time became so crying a shame as to excite criticism even in the Confederate prints.

"Col. SANDERSON seemed to have no patience with them, he seemed to use them more like brutes than men."

For a refutation of this calumny, I refer your Honorable Commission to the testimony of every man or officer who speaks to that point, and were it possible for me to compel the attendance of every man confined on that Island, I would overwhelm you with evidences of my personal kindness and great patience with these unfortunate victims of Southern cruelty. With but a very limited amount of money, comparatively, four hundred dollars in greenbacks, most of it borrowed for the express purpose, I lent various sums to officers and men, a moiety of which I shall never see again; and not a day passed over my head that I did not effect or attempt some act of

kindness for these unhappy and improvident creatures. The true character of my conduct in this respect, however, can never be arrived at save by the searching scrutiny of a Court of Inquiry, and I must content myself in this case by disproving alleged vice without aiming to establish positive virtue. Nevertheless, I would particularly point you to the statements of Sergeant Toland, who is endorsed by Gen. Meade; Private Saurman, Sergeant Pettys, and Private Morgan, endorsed by Lt.-Col. Northcott, and to the statements of those officers who took the pains to examine the men on the Island for the express purpose of ascertaining the truth on this point.

Let me now call your attention to the third charge of this most extraordinary indictment. "Misappropriation of stores sent by the Government, or by the Sanitary Commission." To support it we have two specifications. One from Corporal Taylor, which has already been fully answered; the other by Gen. Neal Dow, in these words: "The U. S. Sanitary Commission sent a great quantity of supplies to me, for distribution, but the Rebels put them into the hands of Col. Sanderson. Only a small part of them was distributed. I am confident that a part of them was given to the Rebels by Colonel Sanderson, besides what they stole, and Col. Sanderson appropriated to his own use a case of egg-nogg, that was marked for the hospital."

Of all the petty acts of this petty man, this is the pettiest; and, like the wasp, it carries its sting in its tail. Were this the only charge against me, I would treat it with the ridicule it deserves, placing before you in its most ludicrous light, the enormous offence involved in the charge—that of robbing Neal Dow, the great Apostle of Temperance and Chief-Advocate of Cold Water, of *his* egg-nogg!

> "Almost as bad, good mother,
> As kill a king, and marry with his brother."

But added as it is to others of such grave import, "the irrepressible spirit of fun," which generally actuates me, is silenced, and I can only answer it in sober sadness.

One of a Committee of Five, which Gen. Dow takes especial care to ignore, I was specially assigned to the distribution of

clothing on Belle Island, leaving to Lt.-Colonels Von Schrader and Hunter, and Capt. Chamberlain, the exclusive care of the prisoners in the warehouses and hospitals, and to Lt.-Col. Boyd entire control of the accounts. At first it was intended that all the Sanitary Commission supplies should be exclusively reserved for the sick, and for a long time this intention was scrupulously observed; but for reasons which I either never knew, or have forgotten, it was suddenly determined by the other members of the Committee, *during my absence*, to divide them equally among the officers of the prison, who would be expected to pay to the Sanitary Commission, on their release, the cost of the articles allotted to them; and one of my messmates, Capt. Fobes, a commissary of subsistence, was selected, at the recommendation of Col. Von Schrader, and without my knowledge, as the most suitable person to transact this business.

A day or two previous to this, however, happening to go to the room used by my colleagues for business purposes, and in which the choicest of these supplies were stored, I noticed a case of egg-nogg was broken open, and several bottles taken therefrom. Turning to one of the committee—Col. Hunter, I think—and Capt. Monroe, the Rebel officer in charge, I asked permission to take that box, agreeing to refund its cost to the Commission when released. To this Captain Monroe acceded, provided I would give him a receipt, which I did, in duplicate, and carried the box myself to the prison, when I returned to my quarters. This article, as Capt. Fobes certifies, was charged to me, and I was prepared on reaching home to pay for it, but was informed that the Commission declined to receive pay, and I therefore spent the amount at the Fair held for its benefit subsequently in New-York. Like every other article of luxury, such as condensed milk, canned meats, preserved fruits and jellies, and other articles of similar character, the box was branded "Hospital Supplies," or words to that effect; at least that is my impression; and as all these articles were fairly distributed among my fellow prisoners, particularly Neal Dow and Col. A. D. Streight, I did not *then* nor *now* consider myself personally amenable to the charge of

robbing the sick. But this little matter of division is not the only incident that appears to have escaped the recollection of my virtuous antagonist. One or two other points, to which I will call his attention and that of your honorable Commission, are equally ignored.

1st. These supplies were never, for one instant, in my hands or under my control; consequently I could not have given any portion, large or small, to the Rebels. In fact, it was only from the Rebels themselves that we could obtain any of them for any purpose whatever; and in parting with them, more than the usual amount of red tape was employed, the whole thing being too good to part with easily. I have not the slightest doubt that many articles were used by them, but it would have been an insult to me to ask my leave to take stores over which I had no command.

2d. A very large share of these supplies was consumed in the hospitals, the store-rooms of each being filled with them on the only two occasions I visited those institutions; and, as Col. LeFavour states, "he received quite a quantity of the stores from Capt. Fobes; and, as far as he is aware, *all* of the officers received a portion of them." And Capt. Fobes himself testifies: "Gen. Dow also received a large supply of stores, and gave his acknowledgements for the same."

3d. Considerable stress being laid by Gen. Dow on the fact of the article appropriated by me being egg-nogg, it is fair to presume that this unwonted solicitude on his part arose from his fear of my making an improper use of it. I, therefore, deem it my duty, in order to allay all anxiety in the mind of this distinguished Temperance Apostle, that this mixture (as prepared for the Sanitary Commission) *contains no liquor!*

He also complains that I appropriated it to *my own use*. This is true: I did use it on the spot. Had I been a more provident and systematic rascal, *I would have brought it home with me.*

To say more of this matter would perhaps invest it with undue importance, but as Gen. Neal Dow has criticised my stewardship so severely, might I not properly scrutinize his in

return; even if, in doing so, I should be forced to descend to his own low arena? But were I to tell you that, in making this examination, I had discovered this honest and patriotic officer, entrusted by a noble charity as its almoner and fiduciary agent with the distribution of its much prized munificence, to a band of noble and suffering comrades, had "appropriated to his own use" a large amount of the *most* needed article; and, whilst revelling in a superfluity, had coolly regarded his unfortunate fellow-prisoners, during an inclement season, painfully passing the weary hours on the bare floor—or, worse yet, "sitting up all night" to avoid the possible contingency of freezing to death, you might justly suspect me of wilfully wronging this excellent man. But, should I go a step further and declare that this world-wide philanthropist—this national Reformer, overlooking the pressing needs of those who surrounded him—"men half starved and half frozen, who had left friends, business, and comfortable homes—in some cases, luxurious homes, to help save their country from being blotted out from the map of nations—many of them educated gentlemen,"—that this eloquent and loyal enthusiast, gushing with tears of pity and sobs of woe; ignoring the immediate necessities of his brother officers had knowingly "and with malice aforethought," *brought away with him* from that dismal and cheerless den subsistence, clothing, and medicine to this a land of plenty, overflowing with milk and honey, you would pronounce the charge incredible and the emanation of a warped judgment and distorted mind.

But, situated as I am, I would not have dared suspect such an act, had not Gen. Neal Dow himself given the clue; but, on reading in his speech delivered at the City Hall in Portland, that "he had brought two large trunks away with him," and unable to comprehend how anything possessed of the *least* soul could willingly deprive his comrades—much less, his messmates, of anything conducive to their comfort, whether books, subsistence, or clothing, I was induced to make the inquiry in my correspondence with my brother officers, and now present your Honorable Commission with the result. This difficulty between Gen. Dow and myself has not been of *my*

seeking. Not liking him or his antecedents, I avoided him. Having enough of my own business to attend to, I had no time to devote to "his sayings and doings;" and, although I never considered him an honor to the cloth, I did not deem it my duty to act the spy upon his actions in order that he might "be dismissed the service." Even when warned against him and his black list, conscious of no wrong, I entertained no fear; and even now, when forced to repel his gratuitous assaults and measure character for character, I exhume his bad acts and anatomize his defects, as a surgeon would a corpse—disliking the task, but necessitated by love of science or truth to endure the odor.

But who accuses him of this meanest of meannesses? Col. Rodgers, Col. Williams, Col. Farnsworth, Capt. Timony, Lt. Lennig, and last and strongest, *Capt. Hamlin*. As you do not probably know this officer, let me explain why I emphasize his name. When our chaplains, thinking after the comforts of home, and "the flesh-pots of Egypt," left us sick and sad, weary and in prison, without a spiritual adviser or religious guide, a few gentlemen, humble "soldiers of the Cross," emerged from their obscurity, and modestly but firmly avowed themselves followers of Him, who never deserts the needy and penitent, and is to be found more frequently in the cot of the lowly than in the temples of the great. These men, the only links between ourselves and Christianity, in earnest and sincere words, nightly sent forth their prayers to the Great Deliverer for freedom from bondage, and besought us in gentle and persuasive terms to put our trust in Him. Visiting every room in turn, the hardiest ruffian and the greatest disbeliever refrained from interference, and respected, if they did not heed them. Among them were Powell, Northcott, Whitesides, and *Hamlin*—brave officers in the cause of Freedom, they were true soldiers in the cause of God. Serene in temper and equable in mind, they stood unmoved amid the crash of character and the flood of slander that filled and permeated those prison halls, and whilst attentive to their own affairs, were ever ready to give a helping hand to others. Such men, truthful themselves, despise the

hypocrite, and manfully battle for the right, whether in public or private life. From one of them we have these words :

"I was well acquainted with Gen. Neal Dow. I saw him take from the prison two trunks, when he left for the North.

"I saw him pack the trunks. He did put some blankets in them.

"The number of blankets General Dow saw fit to take up to Maine with him, I don't exactly know. I heard it was *fourteen. I know he took several !*"

Capt. Hamlin slept within ten feet of Gen. Neal Dow, and had this knowledge thrust upon him ; he did not spy it out.

Sterne it was, I believe, who passed a starving beggar to sentimentalize over a dying jackass ; but it is left to Neal Dow to ignore the real sufferings of his brother officers, under his own eye, to bewail the imaginary woes of men he never saw.

Having already directed his attention to "Holy Writ," let me now bring to his notice the next best book—Shakspeare ; wherein, if he seeks, he will find this passage, which I advise him "to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest :"

> "Heat not a furnace for your foe so hot
> That it doth singe yourself : we may outrun
> By violent swiftness that which we run at,
> And lose by overrunning."

I now approach the most important and most damning charge, one which has flown to the nethermost corners of the earth, on lightning wings, proclaiming me to all humanity, a tainted and accursed traitor. Born of an accident, it was covertly taken, and carefully nursed by my enemies, who ingeniously concealed its growth, until circumstances enabled them to present it full-fledged, its first appearance in public having been skillfully manipulated by hints, inuendoes, and anonymous advertisements.

During the month of November, 1863, Dr. Spencer, Streight's own Surgeon, was released, and the first result of his liberation was a fulsome report of his leader's great raid (?) and a

quiet little paragraph intimating that a certain well-known "Union Lieut.-Colonel had frustrated a plan of escape by disclosing it to the Confederates." In the month of February, '64, a long statement was published in the Washington *Star*, and copied in most of the leading journals, graphically portraying the hardships of those who had escaped through the tunnel, and describing at full length the scene supposed to have taken place in Libby Prison, when it was found out that a certain Union Lieutenant-Colonel had betrayed our plan of escape to the Rebels, *not one word* of which was *true*. At the moment of this publication but little hopes of an exchange were entertained, and the conspirators had every reason to expect ample time for the full development of their machinations. Col. Streight, the foster parent of this charge, having escaped, himself took the field, and on every occasion, and in every place, from the private office of the Secretary of War to the festal board of the Loyal League Club, elaborated and detailed my great crime. At the very moment when the poison was working strongest, I made my appearance, and in the very first stopping place, Annapolis, learned that certain Doctors had been circulating reports injurious to my character some time back. On reaching Washington more definite information was given me, and by dint of exertion I succeeded in obtaining my first experience "under arrest." After months of laborious effort, I have at length gained a knowledge of this foul accusation, and find it worded thus, (the *italics* being my own):

"Early last fall, *we* had arrangements nearly perfected for breaking out and capturing the City. *We* had about 1,000 officers and almost 10,000 soldiers there, and were carelessly guarded. Suddenly *we* saw two pieces of artillery planted near and bearing on *us*, and some companies of soldiery stationed in front of the prison. Soon *we* learned that Col. SANDERSON had betrayed *us* to the Rebels. The indignation of the officers was very great, but it was finally allayed upon assurances that there was no *intention* of communicating the secret beyond our own officers in the hospital. Of these matters I am not personally cognizant, but think Col. Streight will be able to substantiate them."

Will it be believed, gentlemen, that at this very instant of

time Brigadier-General Neal Dow, who writes as if he was present, was just one thousand miles distant from the location of the scene so clearly described? Would it be deemed possible, in this age, when an officer's word is considered equal to his oath, that any one holding such rank would deliberately set down and write this most cruel statement as having occurred under his own eye, when, at the very moment he was so far distant that no known mode of locomotion in that country could have transported him short of three days? To be sure, he says, "I am not personally cognizant of these matters," but is it the custom of truthful or just men thus to speak, when every word they utter, based on their high position, is calculated to destroy a fellow-creature's character?

> "Who stabs my name would stab my person too,
> "Did not the hangman's axe lie in the way."

That a general officer, engaged in the service of his country, should so far demean himself, is I am proud to say, an anomaly; and Neal Dow did well when he resigned a commission he knew so little how to appreciate. That he was not cognizant of the matters he here speaks of, would be very apparent had I been able to obtain a statement from Col. Cesnola, but as that officer declines to inform us on the points in question, of which he alone can speak by the book, I must depend upon others not so deeply versed in the details, to show how little he did know. From all the testimony I have been able to obtain, it appears that there was a very great diversity of sentiment as to all the plans of escape. What, in my opinion, was deemed thoughtful, feasible, and facile of execution, is branded by another as "wild and impracticable;" while what was esteemed bold and daring by some, was in the judgment of others "fool-hardy and murderous." The plan, that was in reality meant to be disclosed, was undoubtedly that described in my narrative, and my impression is, from all I can learn, that it leaked out through one Vermillion, a Union prisoner who was acting as hospital attendant, and learned it from Capt. Skelton, whilst in the hospital.

It is clear that Mr. Vermillion was possessed of none of the precise details, as the measures taken by the confederates fully revealed. How much Capt. Skelton told to Vermillion, whom we then regarded as a trustworthy loyal man, I do not know, but it seems certain that Vermillion could only have had a general view of the proposed plan, or else the open and active means to redress the attempt would not have been employed by the rebels in October, to quell an outbreak to culminate in December. I had hoped to receive Capt. Skelton's statement ere this, he having volunteered it on hearing of my arrest in Washington, but for reasons unknown to me it has not yet reached me, although I hope to be able to file it before my case is adjudicated, having not only written to him but advertised for him.

Again, if I were the traitor Gen. Dow insinuates, would I not have betrayed the whole secret, and in a way to benefit the rebels? As it was they were simply misled, and we in no way injured. And yet again, if the arrangements were only *nearly* perfected, how were they frustrated? If we had no intention of breaking out *then*, in what respect were we damaged by the untimely demonstration of our keepers? And last of all, what was I to gain by this act of treachery? Men do not sacrifice all they hold dear for a whim. Nor will any sane man abandon name, honor, family and friends, without some compensating benefit. Every one they say has his price, but I have yet to hear at what figure I was purchased. I have been told since my liberation, that it was reported that I enjoyed unusual privileges—that I had the freedom of the City—that I was hand in glove with Jeff Davis and all the magnates of the Confederacy,—that in fact, I was having an unusual good time, and rather liked it than not. If to be cribbed, cabined, and confined with one thousand others in a loathsome, unclean and badly ventilated prison, with a soft plank for my couch, and half rations for my fare, are unusual privileges, I had them. If, whilst engaged in the duties of my position, to be hurried through by-streets under escort of an armed guard, who would not permit me to make the commonest purchase in any store, is enjoying the freedom of a

City, I had it to my heart's content; and if the strongest interest could not avail to get me out of my prison for a few short hours, to see some life-long friends, is to be hand in glove with the dignitaries of rebeldom, I don't think much of their friendship, and trust I may never have a second experience. But if these stories have ever been seriously believed, I here pronounce them unqualifiedly false, in gross and in detail, and challenge any one to show the slightest advantage enjoyed by me over my fellow prisoners, not shared in common by every other member of the committee.

As to Col. Streight's plan, it was not at *that* moment, *nor at any other*, as far as I can learn, fully decided upon. Rash, impetuous, and opposed to everything like discipline, none but those believing in muscle and a free fight could be induced to enlist under his banner, especially as many of the really courageous officers in the prison, men like Col. Rose, had no confidence in his courage or stability.

But apart from any argument, let me examine Gen. Dow's account of my treachery, and how it was received.

"Soon *we* learned that Col. SANDERSON had betrayed us to the rebels. The indignation of the officers was very great, but it was finally allayed upon assurances that there was no *intention* of communicating the secret beyond our own officers in the hospital."

What rose-water rage must have filled our baffled braves, who when nearly ready to emerge from a hated and loathsome prison, would permit any such reasons to stand between them and their just indignation! Assurances! from whom? And how proven? Had an avalanche of my injured comrades hurled themselves upon me—one man—under the influence of such information, and torn me limb from limb, who would have blamed them? If an infuriated crowd, crazed by disappointment, had pressed me on every side, and with a thousand voices rained their execrations on my head, and demanded in tones of thunder the causes of my base action, who would not have praised them? Had a chosen few, high-toned, honorable men, clothed in the dignity of rank and patriotism, and incited by virtuous rage, called

upon me and wrung from me the only assurances to be received on such a point, *those of entire innocence*, who would not have commended their moderation and patience? Could every officer in that prison be placed before your honorable Commission and be forced to answer *on oath* that simple question: "Did you ever personally charge Col. SANDERSON, or hear any other officer or person charge him with having betrayed any plan of escape to the Rebels?" *I pledge my soul* that not one of them would, truthfully, reply in the affirmative. And why not? Were they *all* afraid? Could not *one* Bell-the-Cat be found among so many heroes, to cram my treacherous tongue down my recreant throat? Among that company of a thousand, they were not *all* cowards! Hundreds of them had "sought the bubble reputation at the cannon's mouth," and dared "do all that may become a man," *but they did not dare do that!* And why? *Because they knew it was a lie!* Unarmed, sickly, and apparently an old man, there was nothing in my personal appearance, demeanor or antecedents to strike such terror in martial breasts, or hold them in shivering awe, whilst discussing with bated breath, my damnable sin. Nine-tenths of them surpassed me in agility and personal strength, and yet it does not appear from the statements of my enemies, or the admissions of my friends, that this charge was *ever* brought to my notice, save by one person, in a very cursory way, and then almost under a pledge of secrecy, with the assurance that no one, knowing the brutal source whence it emanated, attached the slightest credence to it. Powerless to act, at that moment, decisively and definitively, I was forced to defer all action until my good fortune should once again restore me to my own lines, when I proposed, Government permitting, to afford this cowardly calumniator an opportunity of explaining, before his peers, certain incidents of his own military life and conduct, which in my opinion, required elucidation, especially this most flagrant and unsoldier-like act of traducing and defaming a brother officer. That it has been for the interest, if not absolutely for the preservation of this person, that he should spare no effort to crush me, admits of no denial. A long continuance in error and wrong-doing had clearly brought

him under the ban of military law. Judging me by himself, and giving me credit for an inveteracy of hate equal to his own, he could not but believe me in earnest in my expressed intentions; and was compelled to exercise all the ingenuity of his subtle and tortuous character to devise my downfall. Suspected, if not openly charged, by his command, and publicly denounced by the leading journals of his own party, of a base and cowardly surrender of the troops entrusted to his care; and conscious of having violated one of the clearest and least disputable paragraphs of our military code, nothing was left him but trickery and falsehood. With the hope, and not a vain one, as it has subsequently appeared, he sought to cover up the disgrace of his surrender, by laboriously sought sympathy for his sufferings. In every account, industriously circulated throughout the length and the breadth of the land, harrowing descriptions were ingeniously foisted, of the sufferings of "Streight and his men," and so great was his anxiety to effect this result that, where ill-treatment was not willingly accorded, he willfully sought it. Where any officer permits himself to speak of this man, with but one or two exceptions, he speaks of him disparagingly; and, in but a single instance does he obtain the admiration of any one, and in that only case, the compliment is most questionable. But Col. Streight mistook me. Appreciating the demoralizing effect of such imprisonment, I knew that many animosities were engendered which rapidly disappeared under the humanizing influences of freedom. For myself, so grateful was the feeling of happiness at my liberation; so deep my horror of the evil passions brought to being in those prison cells; that I sincerely desired to leave behind me every sentiment of hate and revenge, save of the common foe. And even whilst *there* I was as ready to forgive as to resent an injury, as ready to offer as receive an apology. The great struggle for the life of a nation gives ample scope and verge enough for the most contentious spirit, and before the grandeur of such a conflict all petty and personal differences sink into insignificance and shrink from the contrast. With such feelings Col. Streight had but little to fear from me unless compelled by duty to attack him, and I would even now

spare him, were I not obliged to expose the cause of his intense hatred to me. As to the charge of having disclosed to any Rebel officer that Streight had organized a plan to break out and capture the City, I pronounce it an utter falsehood. I frankly confess that I never believed that Col. Streight had any plan which he had the courage to carry out, and if I spoke of it at all among my comrades, it was in the way of a joke or a sarcasm.

But enough of him for the present: his ranking officer claiming my attention. Brig. Gen. Neal Dow states that "*assurances* were given that there was no *intention* of communicating the secret beyond our own officers in the Hospital;" and, upon these assurances, the "great indignation" of my fellow-prisoners "was allayed." If this be true, it is fair to suppose that these assurances whatever they were or by whom given, were deemed sufficiently *satisfactory* to induce the parties in interest to disbelieve the charge and receive the party accused in full fellowship again. This being the case, *why is that charge again revived?* What right has Gen. Dow, who was not present, and Col. Streight, my bitterest enemy, and therefore not qualified, to dispute a verdict rendered on the spot, and by those most competent to decide?

I think I have said enough to refute this most baseless calumny; but, before dismissing the subject entirely, it will possibly be expected of me to make some specific denial; but I can hardly bring myself to the deep degradation of seriously stating that I was not guilty in thought, word, or deed of the atrocious act laid to my charge. Rather and better might I say, with old Belarius:

> "My fault being nothing (as I have told you oft)
> But that *two villains*, whose false oáths prevail'd,
> Before my perfect honor, swore to Cymbeline,
> I was confederate with the Romans;"

lest, however, some carping critic may urge this quibble against me, I do most solemnly and unequivocally affirm and declare, by all I hold most dear here or most sacred hereafter, without evasion or mental reservation of any kind whatsoever, that I

never in any way or under any circumstances, knowingly, intentionally, or willingly intimated, hinted, revealed, or disclosed any plot, plan, scheme, or intention having for its object or result the escape, flight, or liberation of any one or more of my fellow-prisoners—officers or privates, friend or foe, to any Confederate officer, official, or citizen. And I do also most sincerely and religiously believe that no personal distinction or hopes of present comfort or future aggrandizement would have induced me to forego or abandon my share in any such enterprise, could it have been consummated or even attempted with any show of success. To have been the humble originator of so brilliant an achievement would have filled to the utmost my most sanguine hopes of glory, and would have been the proudest heir-loom I could have bestowed upon my family.

There yet remains one other charge which might more properly be classed under the head of disloyalty, but as it engenders certain feelings of a personal character, I have reserved it for the present.

"Col. SANDERSON was constantly defending the Rebels, and justifying them in their treatment of our soldiers, averring that they were properly treated."

When Gen. Neal Dow wrote those lines *he knew* them to be *false*, and when he proceeds to say, "Some of this I heard on one occasion, and interposed with the facts at Belle Isle, which existed under his observation," he duplicated the wrong. I have endorsed the only truthful statement in his letter—that there was no intercourse between us,—and can recollect but three occasions when words of any character were exchanged. Once when I made a demand for blankets, next when I reiterated that demand, and last when about leaving the prison, I transferred to him some medicines for distribution, a portion of which, I have since been informed, he brought away with him. Since my liberation I have been told that he was in the habit of *talking at me.* If this be so, 'tis pity; he had his labor for his pains. I heeded him not.

That I sometimes contradicted, and corrected gross errors and misstatements made by the designing or ignorant is true. A good cause can never be bolstered by a lie; whilst a bad

one may gain by the misrepresentations of its opponents. That their conduct to us, as well as to the enlisted men was cowardly, cruel, and unusual among civilized people cannot be denied ; but *their* wrong does not justify *our* willful error, nor will their barbarities excuse our falsehood. Our grievances were many, too many, but we weakened their force when we fabricated or overstated them. As a gentleman and man of honor, I could not permit my silence to be construed into tacit acquiescence, and when an egregious error was brought to my notice, I corrected it as far as I could. That neither we nor the men were treated, as alleged, *as badly as we could be*, is evidenced by the proofs of still greater barbarity visited upon them since our departure.

Requiring no personal favors from the authorities of the prison, and obtaining none other than those inseperable from the necessities of my position, I was only anxious to secure their good feeling, in order to influence them for the benefit of others not so fortunate or so provident as myself, and that I did so is so stated by many of my companions. From long association fully cognizant of the southern character, I was aware that an outward courtesy and apparent gentlemanly demeanor went far to win their esteem. Accustomed by years of experience as a hotel keeper to all the observances of polite society, I found no difficulty in assuming a role by no means new to me. Thanks to my white beard and my being a stranger I was uniformly treated with kindness and courtesy by every one I came in contact with during my captivity, with the single exception of a difficulty at Culpeper when a crowd of citizens and Baltimore roughs proposed to lynch me because, when charged, I openly avowed myself "an abolitionist." Carefully avoiding all unnecessary discussions on political subjects, outside of the prison, I never hesited to acknowledge my principles when asked, or defend my government when challenged.

But in addition to my love of truth, and my desire to stand well with my keepers, there was another reason for my conduct of a peculiar and personal nature. My wife, with whom I had lived happily for nearly *twenty-five years*, had been,

during the earlier portion of my imprisonment, gradually passing from earth. A cruel and insidious disease was hourly sapping her life, and every communication from home brought fresh tidings of her decay. Prime among her griefs, although racked with bodily pains, was the idea of *my* sufferings. Immured in a loathsome prison, and enduring the horrors, almost of "the middle passage," as the terrible accounts constantly published to the world gave her cause to suppose, her days were embittered and her nights disturbed by the thoughts of my privations, and in the very delirium of death this sentiment was paramount in her mind. Knowing the sorrow this produced, and feeling how causeless was her anxiety, I endeavored in all my letters to dissipate this feeling, writing her ever in the most consolatory manner both as to my situation and my health. Everything of the brightest, and whatever of the ludicrous could be found, was repeated for her benefit; but when serious reflection succeeded the pleasure of hearing from me, her quick perception and ever watchful love would suspect an imposition, and, whilst thanking me for the sentiment that dictated the action, would gently reprove me for the supposed concealment of the truth. And with this belief she died, ignoring to the very last her own real pains to bewail my imaginary ones. How in my heart I cursed the authors of this unnecessary sorrow, and how I despised the strong men, who, for the sake of an ephemeral and factitious notoriety would whine over their scanty fare like gluttonous boys or soured crones, whilst needlessly racking the heart-strings of dear ones at home. And such things prate of their patriotism and vaunt their services, seeking, under cover of a lie, sympathy for unexperienced sufferings, and recompense for unendured privations. *But they were not all so.* Among that band were many true devoted patriots. Men "who had "left friends, business and comfortable homes, in some cases "luxurious homes, to help save their country from being blot-"ted out of the map of nations," and had done so with but little hope of reward or expectation of promotion; who well and bravely performed their duty, and only asked a successful result as their guerdon. With sufficient of anger against the

deluded fools who sought a nation's disruption, they bore no personal feeling into a strife which was waged for the holy cause of unity and freedom. Their erring brethren were only so when engaged in open and deadly acts of rebellion; and although too proud to ask a favor, they knew how to appreciate a courtesy. The field of battle being with them the only arena of carnage, they did not sheathe their swords in an imaginary foe, or kill rebels on fools-cap paper.

"True courage scorns
"To vaunt her prowess in a storm of words."

For such men I had not only sympathy, but assistance, and I can truthfully assert that no one *of them* ever sought me for aid in vain. In many cases too modest to ask, or too proud to acknowledge, they have forced me to pry out their secret sorrows, and share my plenty with them through third persons.

Under these circumstances, and thus placed, Brig.-General Neal Dow found me on his return. Startled by the dire misfortune that was hanging over me, and forced to remember that all things perish here below, my thoughts could not but be serious, and my every hour tinctured with sorrow. Disgusted with the frivolous whinings and shallow grievances of the empty-headed, I shut myself up in the sanctity of my woe, and sought, in that crowd, to be alone. Content with the few real friends who surrounded me and respected my grief, I neither courted nor flattered this "little great man," and to an informal request to take him into companionship, curtly declined.

Unable to appreciate the true sentiments that dictated my conduct to the enemy, the antagonism between him and myself was instant and perfect. He had never read, or if he had, would ne'er believe, that—

"Seldom yet did living creature see
"That courtesie and manhood ever disagree."

The slave of an idea, and a firm believer in moral suasion "under penalty of the law," he sought to stunt all man-

kind on the Procrustean bed of his own construction, than which, in his mind, nothing could be more perfect. Neal Dow and I, I am proud to say, can have nothing in common, for even his virtues so resemble vice, that the timid proselyte shrinks from them in awe, and takes another road. Of him may fitly be said—

> "He was a man
> "Who stole the livery of the court of Heaven,
> "To serve the devil in."

As evidence of the utter dissimilarity between us, I would respectfully call the attention of your Honorable Commission to the testimony of my brother officers, and in every case where they trust themselves to speak of him, it is couched in as contemptuous language as regard to his high rank will permit.

From one we learn that "he had no influence, and was often the subject of ridicule for those who forgot his rank in the general misery that pervaded the prison." By another we are told that "he was so selfish, domineering, and 'old-woman-ish' as to be almost universally disliked;" whilst from a third we hear that he was not "considered any great honor to the uniform he *did* wear—a Captain's coat and a private's pantaloon's,—or the service; as evidently his 'forte' was not that of a military man, but that of a *Temperance lecturer;*" a role he filled so much to his own acceptation, that, as a gallant sailor tells us, "he lectured twice a week on temperance when even *water* was most difficult to obtain."

From many comes confirmation of a mystical "Black List," in which were noted "all the rumors,—of which the prison was full at all times,—that came to his notice, *to the disadvantage of Lieut.-Colonel* SANDERSON, or others,—the former more particularly,"—and "in which he was so anxious to get something to write down that he would get into an argument with some one, then pick up what little things the man might have said unwittingly, and book them preparatory to a settlement after their release."

Truthfully does he say in his "familiar" letter to his superior officer, that he took "great interest in my sayings and

doings," and well might he offer to "add a great quantity of similar matter," when all his days were employed in raking up slanders against me. To picture him as he was, with cap on sconce and pen in hand, lean, slippered and gowned, shuffling from circle to circle, noting with curious ear the words of all, and inscribing with eager haste their "slips and falls," is far beyond my limning power.

> "See from behind her secret stand
> The sly informer minutes every fault,
> And her dread diary with horrors fill."

When the poet termed that thing a woman he slandered the sex.

Turn to the same testimony, and note how my time was spent.

From *all* you learn that I was gentlemanly and courteous to my comrades, and devoted myself to teaching, systematizing, and organizing that department most necessary for the comfort and happiness of all, whether in or out of prison.

By *nearly* all you are told that I was constantly engaged in ameliorating the condition of my companions by advice, by influence, by money, and by the necessaries of life.

When a great calamity was being initiated for our cause, alone, out of six hundred, I sought to convey the announcement to my Government, and, lacking strength myself, offered the sinews of war to my abler associates. History does not record the name of him who seconded me!

When in its wisdom our Rulers placed in the hands of a *then* highly esteemed statesman the power to release us, when in his judgment it could be honorably attained, I was one of the few that applauded the act, and upheld the weak-kneed and despairing.

Avoiding political discussions with our enemy as unprofitable and unnecessary, I never hesitated to support my principles or defend my Government when the one were questioned or the other defamed.

Called to fill a position which had already martyred two ranking officers, I performed the duties of it to the entire sat-

isfaction of my friends and the astonishment of foes, private as well as public ; watching carefully over the interests of my Government, upholding the honor of the service, and arresting the demoralization of my comrades—whether commissioned or enlisted.

Thrown into constant contact with the common enemy, I so carried myself that I won even their respect and esteem, while the influence gained thereby was exerted in behalf of my fellow-prisoners.

In connection with this I would dilate here on an idea which had escaped my recollection until recalled by the statement of Capt. Charlier. Believing that much good could be done to my brother officers and the soldiers, more especially by any one thoroughly cognizant of the difficulties in the way of prompt delivery of our letters and boxes, I sought to obtain from my fellow-prisoners their signatures to a memorial to the President of the United States, asking that some one who had been a prisoner of War in the hands of the Confederates should be appointed, whose whole duty it should be to arrange and supervise this speciality. Gen. Dow, being the highest ranking officer, the paper was presented to him by Capt. McComas, I think, for his signature. On learning from whom it emanated, "he declined to interfere with the action of the Government in the premises." On discovering it was susceptible of such an interpretation, the idea was immediately dismissed and the paper destroyed, although it had for a long time occupied my thoughts and obtained the approval of many excellent men, and has been since adopted by the General Commanding the Armies.

Having thus, as I trust, proven the negative to the charges of my accusers, let me trench but a moment longer on your time in displaying the affirmative of my position.

Starting, as it were, from the very camp of the enemy, I was, in every sense of the word, a Volunteer both in "men and means," and threw myself into the conflict with all the impulsiveness and energy I was possessed of. Skilled in a speciality which has for its object the preservation, not the destruction, of life, I hastened to place at the disposal of my Govern-

ment, at the earliest and most opportune moment, the benefit of that skill. Anxious to serve and ambitious to excel, I labored late and early to prove my usefulness and the value of my scheme. Foiled by circumstances over which I had no control, I was forced to recede from my lofty aspirations and start from a lowlier rank and on a diminished field. Commencing almost on the lowest rung of the ladder to fame, I gradually ascended, by dint of labor and stress of time, until I attained my past eminence, *than which* no higher grade was permitted a Volunteer. But content with that position, (as I trust I always have been in every phase of life,) I only sought to deserve my honors and fulfill my duty. Stopped short in my military career by the fortune of war, I suddenly found myself called upon to assume new duties. By no means the ranking officer among a crowd of untaught and somewhat insubordinate comrades, I was required to instruct, discipline, and command. Somewhat lacking in self-respect and the remnant of military subordination still existing in them, sapped by those whose duty and position demanded a better example, I found myself called upon to direct men who acknowledged no superior; discipline officers, who regarded no discipline; and teach equals, too wise in their own conceit to heed my instructions. Obedient myself, I would not brook the contrary in others; and, when forced to uphold salutary regulations by severe lessons, *I did not shrink from the responsibility.* To impose rules which would not be heeded, to give orders which would not be obeyed, becomes neither a man nor a soldier. I claim to be both. And yet I challenge any one to say that I exercised my power with partiality or injustice. The horseman that rides a restive steed has bit and spur at his command, to be used when necessity compels; to employ them at any other time is tyrannical and unwise; to neglect their assistance when required, is foolish or cowardly. Of course, I made myself unpopular. Colton tells us, "There are two modes of establishing our reputation: to be praised by honest men, and to be abused by rogues." I have, at least, achieved the latter.

Subsequently selected, against my will, to fill another posi-

tion of responsibility and control, I was brought into immediate contact with a class of men who, of all others, most demand firmness, determination, and discipline. Unaccustomed

> "To paw the ragged multitude with praise
> "Of their ingenuous care and fervent love,
> "For preservation of the Commonwealth."

I recognised with my military inferiors but one language—*that* of *command ;* and exacted from them but one result, *to obey.* Seeking no office and asking no votes, I only strove to fulfill my duties with an eye to the interests of my Government—of which I was, for the moment, the agent ; and over whose property I had, for the time, almost unlimited control. Dealing with beings, many of whom were very wretched and apparently lost to everything but the most animal instincts, and imbued with no feeling save that of self-gratification ; regarding every one attempting to control or limit their desires as an enemy ; and entirely oblivious of subordination, respect, or *esprit de corps,* I was compelled to awaken in them the dormant principles of military requirements, as well for the honor of the service, as the reputation of my section; as well for the security of the good as the punishment of the guilty. But in doing so I endeavored to act with as much kindness as was compatible with command, and require no more etiquette than was perfectly familiar to the least disciplined among them. If I erred 'twas the fault of the head, not the heart. And finally, when called upon to fulfill the letter but not the spirit of a promise, with but limited means and an indefinite imprisonment before me—ignorant of whence the next dollar would come—I emptied my pockets and robbed myself of subsistence to aid and encourage my needy comrades, who, with all the strength, lacked the means to avail themselves of promised freedom from galling chains; and, strange to say, assisted my arch-enemy himself to find the way to my destruction!

And, with such a record, I have been disgraced, dishonored, dismissed! Unheard and unheeded, my name has been thrown to the four winds of heaven, and carried to all corners of the earth, as a *traitor*—as a *brute!* Educated in a school that taught

that love of country was next to love of God—drawing my inspiration from him who drew his from the *very Fathers of our Country**—and sprung from a family that has been honorably represented in every just struggle our country has been engaged in, from the War of the Revolution to the present conflict, I do not choose to have that name, (as yet unspotted and unstained,) classed among the dishonored of the land, without question and without trial.

Well did the poet say :

> "Good name, in man or woman, dear my lord,
> Is the immediate jewel of their souls ;
> Who steals my purse steals trash, 'tis something, nothing,
> 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands ;
> But he that filches from me my good name,
> Robs me of that, which not enriches him,
> And makes me poor indeed."

And now, gentlemen, the case is with you. In my own unskilled, and awkward fashion, heedless of law, and asking only equity, I have my tale unfolded, and in your hands rests my fate. If three years constant and faithful service, risking life and limb on every proper occasion, seeking and gaining the commendation and approval of his commanders, and the good will and respect of his brother officers ; with his whole heart engaged in the contest, and no aspirations but his country's honor ; and when called upon to act in an unusual and extra-official character, endeavoring to conduct himself with dignity, and service, to his comrades ; and with regard for the honor of the cloth, and the interests of his government to his inferiors—entitle an officer to dishonor and disgrace, then *am* I fitly punished. But if devotion to a cause brings desert,—if attention to duty demands countenance,—if zeal in a department ensures appreciation,—if extra work is entitled to extra pay,—if a thorough fulfillment, to the best of his ability, of the duties of his position, and a zealous regard for the rights and

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* My father and my uncle (who was my teacher in early life) were publishers and editors of that national work, "The Biography of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence."

honor of his commission, constitute an officer and a gentleman, I would respectfully ask your honorable Commission to examine the testimony submitted herewith, and to search my record, and decide whether *reward* or *punishment* is more justly my due.

I had in my mind one more word to say. I thought to have brought to your notice the consequences of your decision on those who bear my name and share my blood, but when I reflect that the babe unborn is not more innocent of the crimes alleged than I, I refrain.

> "The purest spring is not so free from mud
> As I am clear from treason."

If I have erred in anything I am man enough to bear the penalty, but if I have done no wrong I ask no condonation. I come to you for Justice, not as a favor but as a right. I am sure you will give it to me, and in that trust I remain,

Very respectfully, your ob't serv't,

JAMES M. SANDERSON.

# Official Report

OF THE

## MILITARY COMMISSION,

**Selected to Examine into the Charges**

AGAINST

## Lieut.-Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON,

MADE BY

## Brig.-Gen. NEAL DOW

AND

## Corporal TAYLOR.

*Office Military Commission*, 302 "*H*" *St. cor.* 17*th*,
WASHINGTON, D. C., May 19th, 1865.

10 A. M.—The Military Commission met, pursuant to adjournment.

Present :

Brig. Gen. JOHN C. CALDWELL,
Col. GEORGE A. H. BLAKE,
Capt. GEORGE H. CALDWELL, A.A. G.,
*Recorder*.

The Military Commission then proceeded to examine the case of JAMES M. SANDERSON, late Lieut. Colonel, Commissary Department.

This officer was dismissed the service by Special Order, No. 201, Par. 32, War Dep't, Adj't-General's Office, Washington, D. C., June 8, 1864.

He asks for restoration.

His case was referred to this Commission, by order of the Secretary of War, Oct. 14th, 1864.

The Military Commission, after a careful examination of the papers in the case and of the accused, respectfully submit the following report :—

It appears, from the papers submitted in this case to the Commission, that Col. SANDERSON was appointed a Captain and Comm'y Sub. Vols., September 7th, 1861, and assigned to duty with the late Gen. Wadsworth. He afterwards served with Gens. McDowell, Reynolds, and Newton. He was appointed Ad. A.D.C., with the rank of Major, July 15th, 1862; and Corps Commissary, with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, January 1st, 1863.

On the 20th of July, 1863, while in company with Major Russell, A.A. G., First A. C., searching for a ford to cross the column over a deep and rapid stream in the vicinity of Middleburg, Va., he was captured and taken to Richmond; where he remained a prisoner until March 7th, 1864. It was while confined in Libby Prison that the offences for which he was dismissed, are alleged to have been committed. The only witnesses against him are Corp. Wm. A. Taylor, 6th N. Y. Cav. and Brig.-Gen. Neal Dow.

The statement of Corp. Taylor is not verified by oath, and the charges of Gen. Dow are contained in a letter addressed to Major-General Hitchcock, Commissary for the exchange of Prisoners. Gen. Hitchcock reviewed these two documents in a report to the Secretary of War, and recommends the dismissal of Col. SANDERSON. He was accordingly dismissed the service by S. O., No. 201, Par. 32, A. G. O., June 8th, 1864; amended by S. O., 217, Par. 7, A. G. O., June 23, 1864.

The principal witness against Col. SANDERSON is Gen. Neal Dow; and attention is called to the fact that most of his charges relate to conduct that did not come under his personal observation. In fact, Gen. Dow says in the beginning of his communication that "he had no intercourse" with Colonel SANDERSON. The principal charge against Colonel SANDERSON is—

CHARGE 1ST—*Cruel treatment of our Prisoners at Bell Isle.*

**Gen. Dow** says :—

"After my protest to Gen. Winder, against the cruel treatment of our soldiers at Belle Isle, I was not permitted to visit them any more, and the business of distributing this clothing to the soldiers (all of which was sent to me) was put into his hands. Thus, for weeks, he came into daily contact with the soldiers there; and his conduct towards them was always harsh and cruel. Once, a poor fellow applied for some clothes—he was very miserable with cold and hunger: SANDERSON said, 'Damn you—didn't I tell you if you came again I'd kick you?' He, then, turned him round, kicked him, and followed him with repeated kicks; Capt. Atwood, 16th Maine, Lt. Col. Archer, and others saw this. One poor fellow, barefooted, asked for shoes, and received curses instead; Capt. Atwood saw this. The next day but one, Capt. Atwood saw the same man brought out in a blanket, with feet badly frozen —I think he suffered amputation. The Rebel Lieutenant in charge remonstrated with SANDERSON, for his harsh and cruel treatment of the soldiers, in the presence of Atwood. His intercourse with the soldiers was always with oaths, and curses, and bitter revilings.

"Many of these poor fellows he caused to be bucked and gagged—and this to half-starved and half-frozen men, who have left friends, business, and comfortable homes—in some cases, luxurious homes to help save their country from being blotted out from the map of Nations; many of these men were educated gentlemen. On one occasion, (a cold day,) a squad of men, half-starved and pinched with cold, came out for clothes. At the head of the line to be served first was a soldier thin and blue, curled up and shivering—his hands in his poor apologies for pockets. With oaths and curses, SANDERSON demanded, why he did not take the position of a soldier; and he drove the poor wretch to the tail of the line, to wait a long hour or two, as a punishment."

Gen. Dow further says, "I have written to Capt. Atwood, at Gardiner, Me., asking him to send you immediately full details of everything within his knowledge on this subject with the names of other witnesses."

No communication seems to have been received from Capt. Atwood; at least none is contained in the papers before the Commission.

**Corp. W. A. Taylor,** Co. E, 6th N. H. Cav., in a statement made by him, but not verified by oath, says :—

"Col. SANDERSON was employed to deliver the supplies, assisted from time to time by another Federal officer. He was employed some two or three hours per day, for some three months. During this time, he issued no provisions at all. Col. SANDERSON was very harsh in his treatment of the men. During this time, he (Taylor) was with Col. SANDERSON, under his orders, assisting in the delivery of the supplies of clothing. Occasionally, a man or so would come out and ask for particular articles; and he has heard Col. SANDERSON repeatedly use harsh language toward them, and order them away—calling them 'dirty fellows;' and very often he has seen him kick them, and he has heard him to order some of the men to be bucked. The men were suffering very much from cold and the want of provisions. Col. SANDERSON seemed to have no patience with them. He seemed to use them more like brutes than like men. The reason why he ordered them bucked, as he supposes, was, that they had sold some of their clothing for the purpose of obtaining food. A considerable number of the Rebel guard were clothed in the United States clothing, much of which was obtained from the Union Soldiers, as he (Taylor) supposed, in exchange for provisions; but not all of it, for he saw Col. SANDERSON give some of it away to the Rebels; especially did he see the Colonel give to one man an overcoat.

"Have seen Col. SANDERSON standing with Rebel officers, when some of the Union prisoners would approach with their hands in their pockets—in rags and tatters, and Col. SANDERSON, instead of commiserating their condition, would seem to make sport of them, and order them to take their hands out of their pockets."

In answer to this charge of cruelty, Col. SANDERSON produces the testimony of several officers who accompanied him to Belle Isle, and saw the manner in which he treated the prisoners.

**Brig. Gen. Powell** says :—

"While in command of the West rooms of the Prison, complaints were made to me that, whilst you (Col. SANDERSON) was acting as President of the Committee for the distribution of clothing, etc., to our men, (prisoners of War,) your treatment of them was inhuman, unkind, and disgraceful.

"In order to ascertain the facts in the matter, I obtained permission to visit with you the men on the Island, *without your knowledge as to the real object of my visit.*

"While there, I watched your conduct closely, and do not hesitate to state that I witnessed nothing in your conduct that would in the least substantiate the charges alleged against you as to the abuse of our soldiers; but, on the other hand, I could not but admire the prompt and systematic manner in which you issued the articles to the men."

**Col. H. LeFavour,** 22d Michigan Infantry, who visited Belle Isle in company with Col. SANDERSON, January 22d, 1864, says:—

"I noticed that the intercourse between him and the men was such as should have been between the officer and the soldier.

"He did not maltreat, insult, or punish any of them in my presence; nor did he use oaths, curses, or bitter invectives towards them. I talked with several of the men, and one in particular—a First Sergeant of the 5th Michigan Cavalry, who expressed himself as perfectly satisfied with the manner Col. S. distributed the clothing, and with his actions towards the men; and who said that if Col. SANDERSON had kicked the man he is alleged to have done, he very likely was not treated so severely as he should have been, as there were some men there than whom worse could not be found anywhere, and against whom they were obliged to form an association for self-protection. I did not observe that Col. S. was any more intimate with the officers of the Island than his position would justify."

**Lt. Col. Frederic F. Cavada,** 114th Pa. Vols. says:—

"I was selected to assist the Board of Distribution, for several days. Col. SANDERSON issued the clothing to our prisoners, and seemed to conduct the matter with great order and system. I afterwards heard him accused in the Libby of ill-treatment towards our men. On the occasions when I was with him at Belle Isle, I did not see him kick, strike, or otherwise ill-use any of the prisoners. He was very strict with them, but never in my presence perpetrated any of the cruelties upon them of which I heard him accused. His intercourse with the Rebel officers on Belle Isle was courteous, but I observed on no occasion any evidence of disloyalty on his part.

**Lt. Col. Farnsworth,** 1st Conn. Cav., says :—

"I accompanied Col. SANDERSON to Belle Isle, on the 26th of January, 1864. I did not see him ill-treat, abuse, or insult the prisoners there. He did not accost them with oaths, curses, or bitter revilings; nor did he, to my knowledge, buck and gag or kick them; nor, to my knowledge, did he punish them for not saluting him, or for not taking the position of a soldier. He did not, whilst I was with him, exact more respect than his rank and proper military discipline permitted or required. I should not think he was more intimate with Rebel officers than his official duties or proper courtesy demanded. As far as my knowledge extended, he exhibited a proper caution in issuing the public property in his charge."

**Lt. Col. Jere. Williams,** 25th Ohio Vols., says :—

"I once went with Col. SANDERSON to Belle Isle, where he was engaged in distributing clothing to the prisoners. We were taken there and brought back under guard.

"He conducted his business there systematically and justly, and treated the men with kindness. I conversed with several of the prisoners, all of whom spoke in terms of commendation of his kind manner toward them, and of his fairness and impartiality in distributing clothing, etc."

**Major J. Harris Hooper,** 15th Mass. Vols., says :—

"During my imprisonment, I visited Belle Island once with Lt. Col. SANDERSON. I never heard him accost the soldiers with oaths, curses, and bitter invectives. I have heard that Lt. Col. SANDERSON had authority to punish soldiers, and have been told that the punishment of bucking and gagging was at one or more times resorted to; but have also been told and believe that such punishment was for the commission of some grave offence.

"Lt. Col. SANDERSON certainly exacted respect of the soldiers on Belle Isle, and demanded of them such military etiquette as standing at attention and in the position of a soldier, while addressing him. Brought into contact but once with these poor fellows in their truly pitiable condition—among them brave and good men of my command—I could not, at the time, heartily sustain Lt. Col. SANDERSON in this course; but am free to admit that, after careful thought, my honest conviction was and now is, that the course pursued by Col. SANDERSON towards our soldiers, although at times seem-

ingly harsh, was the wisest and the best; and I fully believe that a more equal and just distribution of the limited supply of stores sent by the U. S. Government for the relief of our soldiers, was made through the rigorous method adopted by Lt. Col. SANDERSON, than could have been made by any other."

**Major Wm. Russell, Jun.,** A. A. G., who accompanied Col. SANDERSON to Belle Isle several days, says :—

"During these visits I was constantly near Col. SANDERSON, and saw his conduct and treatment of the men. He was exacting in his ideas of military etiquette, and would not permit them to treat them or his orders with disrespect or impertinence. He seemed to consider himself more interested in watching over the interest of his Government than in catering to the whims and desires of the men; and, whilst willing to extend to them the aid and comfort in his power, would not overlook or pass unnoticed any attempt on their part to cheat or deceive him. I never saw him treat any man with brutality or insult. He never punished any one for disrespect or insolence, although in some cases he would perhaps have been perfectly justifiable. He was specially severe on deserters, thieves, and men charged with disloyalty or dishonesty; but was not in the habit of using oaths, curses, and bitter invectives. I never saw him kick a soldier, although I heard subsequently from himself that he had done so."

Testimony similar to the above, varying only in form of expression, is given by CAPT. EDWARD A. MASS, 88th Pa. Vols.; CAPT. MARTIN TOWER, 13th Mass., who says that "he (the Col.) "treated the men with all the kindness possible;" CAPT. J. M. MCCOMAS, 9th Md. Vols.; **Capt. Ralph O. Ives,** 10th Mass. Vols., who says that the Colonel,

"By tact and ability, executed his difficult task to the satisfaction of the Rebel authorities and the United States officers and prisoners of War. I can say from my own knowledge that he treated the prisoners as an officer and superior, quelling riot and enforcing regularity in the time and manner of distribution, as his memoranda and accounts will show. I have also talked with numerous prisoners who were on Belle Isle in the various prisons, and have yet failed to find a good soldier who found any fault with Col. SANDERSON.

"The deserters and substitutes were of course loud in their denunciations, for to them Col. SANDERSON was rude, not to say brutal."

**Capt. Ed. A. Fobes,** C. S. 2d Div. Cav. Corps, says :—

"I accompanied Col. SANDERSON twice to Belle Island; found his conduct to the men correct, but severe. He demanded that they should be soldiers at all times, especially before our enemies; such conduct was enforced in proper language, and no man abused.

"Some prisoners were bucked and gagged, for stealing from the general supply of the U. S. clothing, and from each other in camp.

"None were punished for non-compliance with military etiquette beyond a reprimand. Supplies and clothing were denied to such men as were supposed to have taken the oath of allegiance to the Confederate Government, and also for those men detailed voluntarily for the Confederate shoe-shop.

"I can also state, that such men as were refused clothing, etc. by Lt. Col. SANDERSON, were allowed to enter the depot of supplies received from our Government and the U. S. Sanitary Commission, and help themselves *ad libitum*; no account being taken of the same by the Confederate officer in charge, also no United States officer being present.

"In my opinion, Lt. Col. SANDERSON used every means at his command to insure all supplies (especially Government property) being properly distributed; and should be commended for having Confederate soldiers arrested for stealing U. S. overcoats."

**Capt. E. McB. Timoney,** 15th U. S. Infantry, after stating that he never saw Col. SANDERSON abuse or maltreat the prisoners, says :—

"He (the Colonel) did all he could to inspire the men with confidence in the Government and hopes of a speedy exchange."

**Acting Master W. E. H. Fentriss,** U. S. Navy, (Monitor *Neosha*,) says :—

"I was present [at Belle Isle] with him on one occasion and I never saw anything in his deportment unworthy of an officer

of the United States. Our men were much demoralized at that time; their sufferings had rendered them entirely careless and Col. SANDERSON only required of them the respect due to his rank. I never heard an oath from him in the discharge of his duties; on the contrary, his manner was kind and courteous to all."

A similar statement is made by **1st Lieut. Thompson Lennig,** 6th Penn. Cav.

The affidavit of Q. M. Sergt. **Toland,** is accompanied by the following certificate of his character by **Maj. Gen. Meade,** under date of Nov. 21, 1864:—

"This is to certify, that I have long known Washington Toland, Sergt. 9th N. Y. S. M., the son of an old and valued friend of my family, Henry Toland, deceased, formerly of Phila., recently of N. Y., in both of which cities, he and his family were well known. When last I saw Washington Toland he was serving with his regiment in the field, when I exerted my influence, based on my knowledge of his character and services, to have him appointed Asst. Qr. Master of Vols. I believe Sergt. Toland to be in every way reliable, and I should deem trustworthy any statement he made."

Affidavit of **Washington Toland,** Sergt. 9th N. Y. S. M.:

"I was captured on the 7th of Nov. last, on the day of the battle at Rappahannock Station—was confined on Belle Isle with from five to nides thousand prisoners. I know Lt. Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON, Chief Commissary of the 1st Corps. I was detailed at his request to act as one of the clerks, to aid in the issue of clothing sent by the U. S. Government for distributionamong the soldiers. My duty was to give out the shoes; sometimes I issued other articles, but very rarely. Frequently there were no shoes to issue owing to the difficulty in obtaining them from Richmond.

"I never knew Col. SANDERSON to refuse shoes to any man perfectly barefooted, unless there were none on hand of his size, or the applicant had already been furnished with them, and was suspected of having sold them. I was engaged every day for nearly three months as assistant to Col. SANDERSON, and was never absent except when I was sick.

"Col. SANDERSON took as much care in issuing the clothing

as if it belonged to himself. It was impossible to give the men all they asked for, and sometimes when the stock on hand was small, he would refuse it except in extreme cases, on the ground that the applicant had already been served, or if a strong healthy man, because others were more in need of it. On one occasion he refused me certain articles I desired on that ground, and although much annoyed, I was forced to acknowledge that he was in the right.

"Col. SANDERSON in his manner to the men when drawn up before him, was short, sharp, and decisive, and by many, myself among the number, considered severe. He insisted on their approaching him in a respectful manner, taking the position of a soldier, and awaiting his questions before he would permit them to question him. I never heard him use profane or abusive language, or saw him act in a passionate manner, except in cases when, in my opinion, the conduct of the parties justified it, as there were some men among the prisoners who could be influenced in no other way.

"I never knew him to punish any soldier for refusing to salute him or take the position of a soldier: he has sent them to the end of the line for disobedience or impertinence, there to remain until the last, which would be for half an hour, but not longer. I have heard him called 'a d——d son of bitch' and told to 'go to hell' by a man named Gavit, and another named Blass, both of whom were charged by him and by the prisoners generally, with having taken the oath of allegiance to the Southern Confederacy. The latter, to my knowledge carried a pistol for the purpose of killing Col. SANDERSON for refusing to give him clothing, should an opportunity offer, and I firmly believe such was his intention. Both of these men were in great favor with the Rebels, and hated and despised by all the prisoners. They would endeavor to induce men to attempt to escape, and betray them to the rebel Lieut. Gavit was in the habit of beating prisoners with a club, and Blass once shot a man dead who was attempting to escape. Col. SANDERSON would not give either of these men, or any Rebel sympathiser an article of clothing, nor would he allow them to approach him, and by persisting in this course exposed himself to much insult and even danger.

"Among the prisoners confined in Belle Isle, were at least one hundred and fifty of the most confirmed thieves, villains, and murderers, ever let loose on a community.

"Night after night they made the camp hideous with their marauding. The Rebel authorities made no attempt to restrain them, and no man's life was safe. They would rip open

tents, rob the inmates, and if resistance was offered, brutally murder them. I speak from personal knowledge, and can swear to at least fifty robberies, and two cold blooded murders. At length this abuse became so unendurable that a number of the better class of men under Col. SANDERSON'S direction and advice, organized themselves into a defensive police, and whenever they caught the raiders in the fact, beat them until they were powerless and then brought them outside the enclosure for punishment.

"The Rebel authorities allowed Col. SANDERSON to inflict a light punishment upon them, but never punished them in any other case except at his earnest representation. Col. SANDERSON always told these men that he regretted it was not in his power to kill them, and that he regarded them as worse than brutes or wild animals. He was not permitted to do worse than buck them for one, two or three hours. He never had a man gagged on the Island. I saw him have two men bucked for selling their clothing to the Rebels. I considered that they were justly punished, and their example produced a good effect on others. He was very severe in such cases, and would order men suspected of stealing or selling clothing into the encampment immediately, never permitting them to draw again. No man could have watched over the interests of his Government more carefully than he did, nor do I think any officer could have been more true and loyal in every particular.

"He was in the habit of requesting myself and others privately to take down the names of all Union prisoners who showed sympathy for the Rebels or who accepted any favors, or employment, inconsistent with their obligations to the United States, in order to expose them when the time might come. For a long time the boxes of clothing were placed under a Confederate guard and every night they were broken open and robbed. Col. SANDERSON protested so strongly against this that Lieut. Bossieux permitted him to place the clothing next to his (Bossieux) own tent and put his own guards unarmed over it. After that not an article was stolen except an overcoat by a man named Gavit, of the 1st N. H. Arty., before alluded to, and which Col. SANDERSON traced to its hiding place and obliged the scoundrel to give it up.

"I heard that Col. SANDERSON kicked one man for stealing and selling clothing, but I am not personally cognizant of the fact. I do know that he lent money to several prisoners on the Island, and took pains to do little acts of kindness for the men who were constantly making demands upon him. He

even offered money to men who did not need it, myself among the number. I know of his loaning money to private Goodrich, of the 13th Mass.; Saurman, 90th Pa., an old man of the name of Haggerty, and others whose names I do not remember. He also advanced money to a Sergt., named Burns to prevent him from sacrificing a fine gold watch presented by his mother. He also disposed of some wood-work carved by a man named Clark, of the 61st Pa. Vols., and other articles made by the prisoners.

"He was courteous and respectful in his intercourse with Rebel Officers and was always treated by them with consideration, but evinced no undue familiarity towards them.

"This course enabled him to obtain some privileges for the prisoners that others could not have done. On one occasion, a brute named Hegits, beat and cruelly maltreated one of our men, and upon Col. SANDERSON'S complaint was severely rebuked and his victim released from punishment.

"I frequently saw Col. SANDERSON inspecting the kitchens and reproaching the cooks for carelessness and filthiness. We had reason to regret his being cut off from visiting the Island, as our rations were reduced nearly one half afterwards. I did not think Col. SANDERSON was justified in being so particular in the matter of military etiquette with prisoners, and since my release I have not hesitated to tell him so. I considered him too severe in his manner towards the prisoners, but in his deportment only, in every other respect he studied their interests as his own. I am of the opinion also, that in judging this question, great allowance should be made for the demoralized condition of most of the prisoners. Constant hunger, cold and sickness had caused them to lose all respect for themselves; they were helpless as children, and his severity towards them was perhaps a real benefit by restraining them from selling their clothing and injuring themselves in other ways.

"He did everything a man could do in such a situation to benefit and ameliorate their condition, and used his influence with the enemy to the advantage of the unfortunate victims of southern cruelty. I do not wish to cast any imputations on my fellow prisoners, with the exception of the thieves and murderers before alluded to. They were a brave and noble hearted set of men, most of them captured in the front line of battle. But human nature could not bear up under such constant prolonged misery and torture. In many cases reason gave way and they knew not what they did.

"It would have been impossible for Col. SANDERSON to give an overcoat to a confederate officer without being seen by

myself or some of the clerks. I never knew him to do so, or heard him accused of it. I do not recollect A. W. Taylor as being one of the assistants in the distribution of clothing; he might have been, but not for any length of time.

"I knew Sergt. Hill, but never heard him speak unkindly of Col. SANDERSON. He was not employed in distributing clothing, but was generally engaged in delivering letters brought over by Col. SANDERSON, and in hunting up the friends of the officers who accompanied Col. SANDERSON."

**Private Augustus H. Saurman,** Co. H, 11th Pa. Vols., swears as follows:

"I will certify that I was present at the time the clothing was distributed, being called out of the enclosure by your order or wish, to assist, as one of the issuing clerks, in its distribution.

"The men were called out by squads, and I can't say that you were unnecessary severe or harsh with them, demanding nothing more than the respect and military etiquette due your rank. I never knew you to use any harsh language to any of them, unless they were known as the infernal thieves, robbers and murderers that infested the camp.

"I never knew of you to punish any man for not saluting you, or approaching you with their hands in their pockets; but I often heard you reprimand them for their forgetfulness. There was an organized band in the enclosure, consisting of cut-throats, thieves, and even murderers, who robbed under the name of 'raiders;' and who would sally out at all hours (night especially) and attack and assault the weak, sick and defenseless with their billies, knives and other weapons; and if resistance was made, they would blanket and rob them, and stretch them out for dead, to be carried out in a blanket to their comrades, which caused the greatest distress all over the camp.

"'Twas not safe to go out of your tent at night, unless you went protected and prepared; and when the fact was made known to you, I believe you did your utmost with the Rebel officer in command—Lt. Bossieux—to severely punish those who were reported to you; and I freely say the severest punishment that could be inflicted upon them was not harsh enough: hanging should have been their doom.

"'Twas well known that many of the prisoners, after obtaining clothing from you, traded it off over the bank with the rebel guard for something to eat, (as hunger knows no law,)

and oftentimes would ask for more, alleging it to have been stolen. I never knew you to refuse shoes to any person sadly in want of them, and I never heard or knew of any particular one having his feet badly frozen, or his legs amputated, from your refusal, although I have seen a number of poor boys with their limbs terribly frozen from the exposure we were compelled to submit to by our traitorous friends, the Rebs. I never knew of your kicking a man named Berry ; neither do I remember anything in regard to his case ; nor do I, in my opinion, think that you treated the men more like brutes than like men.

"I must admit the circumstances in which you were placed was enough to try any man's patience. I am not aware of any attempt made on the part of the prisoners to deceive you to the injury of my suffering companions, although you were obliged to exercise great prudence and care in the distribution of the clothing, and I believe you did issue it with as much interest as if it was your own.

"I am aware of some of the prisoners being refused clothing by you, whose false hearts led them to side with the rebel confederacy, one of whom I knew well. That was a Spaniard, Blass by name, of the 2d N. Y. Zouaves, who took the oath of allegiance there ; also one by the name of Gavitt, who was accused of stealing an overcoat. I've heard you accuse the prisoners of being dirty, and reprimand them for it ; but I must say that the fault did not lay with the poor boys, as they were never issued soap wherewith to keep clean, and I doubt whether the dirty sand and fire smoke, ground in, is off yet. I knew of you to loan the men money as a favor, and to do other favors solicited, such as bringing articles of food and comfort from the officers in Libby Prison to the poor starved boys on the Island, who belonged to their companies or regiments ; and I also knew of your giving funds to one person—an Englishman, I think,—to keep him from sacrificing his gold watch, when pressed by hunger, which I considered an act of kindness on your part.

"You appeared on intimate terms with Lt. Bossieux, but I can't say you were more courteous than a gentleman should have been under the circumstances, and I believe you were always treated with respect by Bossieux.

"I must say that our rations were diminished after you ceased the distribution of clothing ; 'twas never issued in quantities sufficient for a dog to live on ; but from the 1st of January, 1864, to the 7th of March, we never knew what it

was to gnaw at a bone—corn bread and bug soup being our daily fare.

"I knew 'Gus. Taylor,—now Captain, I believe,—on the Island. Knew of his being one of the issuing clerks, and knew that you would not allow him any clothing after dispensing with his services; bnt I am unaware of the charges preferred against him by you. He acted as a clerk before I came out. I also knew Serg. Hill, and I never knew of him to speak ill of you, nor any other of the clerks employed by you. I also believe that much of the clothing was preserved through you, by placing the clerks as guards over the clothing, to keep the Rebel guards from stealing it. I was one of the guards myself."

**James J. Morgan,** Private of the 12th Regiment, West Va. Vols., who was captured at Winchester, Va., June 15th 1863, and was a prisoner on Belle Isle until December 27, 1863, says :—

"During our stay at Belle Isle, clothing and provisions were sent by our Government to the Federal prisoners. The clothing was distributed to us by Federal officers, and the officer who took the lead in this matter was a man called Col. SANDERSON—an elderly-looking, gray-haired gentleman.

"He required a punctilious observance of military etiquette, but as far as I could observe he distributed the clothing with strict justice. The clothing not being sufficient to furnish all the prisoners, he was very particular in distributing it to the most destitute. I witnessed no cruelty on his part towards the prisoners. His conduct was strictly military, but as far as I was capable of judging, was guided by the principles of the strictest justice."

**Lt. Col. Northcott,** 12th W. Va. Vols., introducing the statement of Morgan, says :

"I am personally acquainted with the said Morgan, and believe him to be a reliable man, and his testimony worthy of full faith and credit."

**Sergt. Chas. Petteys,** 100th N. Y. Vols., late a prisoner at Belle Isle, under oath, says :

"That in the winter and spring of 1863 and 1864, while a prisoner as aforesaid, saw and knew Lt. Col. SANDERSON of the United States Commissary Dept., who was engaged in dis-

tributing clothing to the needy on said Island among the prisoners, that he saw him daily. That he never saw him guilty of any brutality or unkindness with enlisted men with whom he came in contact; that he enforced discipline; that he preserved regularity; and, in the opinion of this deponent, it was because of this very discipline and regularity that the lawless and vicious found great fault with him; deponent knows of certain bands called raiders, who attacked and robbed whomsoever they could; that to this class Lt. Col. SANDERSON was very severe; so much so, that the practice was greatly broken up by the means suggested by him to the prisoners there confined; deponent also declares that he never saw or heard of Lt. Col. SANDERSON kicking or striking any man; that, had such been the case, he would have been very likely to have heard of it, as he was a sergeant of a squad, and moreover was constantly present while Col. SANDERSON was giving out said supplies."

There is no evidence that Col. SANDERSON kicked any man except one named Berry, and the account of this is given by SANDERSON himself. His account appears clear and consistent, but is too lengthy for quotation. He says:—

"It is the only event of my imprisonment I would care to alter; not because the party punished did not deserve that and more, but simply because it was an undignified exhibition of temper quite foreign to my nature, and not at all calculated to raise me in the estimation of my enemies or myself."

Col. SANDERSON, in his "Answer," says of Corporal Taylor, the only evidence against him who testifies to what he saw,) that while "acting for a while as issuing clerk, he was detected in the act of appropriating certain articles of clothing without permission, and punished by a return to the encampment, and the refusal on my part to allow him to draw anything from the general stock."

After a careful consideration of all the evidence on this charge, and considering the fact that Gen. Dow saw none of the ill treatment of our soldiers which he alleges, and that the only witness against Col. SANDERSON who testifies to what he could have seen, is a private soldier who had been detected

by Col. SANDERSON in stealing, and punished therefor, and that even his statement is not given under the solemnity of an oath; considering also the number and character of the officers who accompanied Col. SANDERSON to Belle Isle and saw him in the daily performance of his duties, and who all testify to the order, method, promptness, ability and efficiency with which he distributed the supply of clothing furnished by the government, the Commission is of the opinion that he deserves no censure for the manner in which he performed his duties while a member of the board of distribution.

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CHARGE 2D—*Misappropriation of Government Stores.*

The following is the only evidence to sustain this charge.

**Gen. Dow,** says :—

"The U. S. Sanitary Commission sent a great quantity of supplies to me for distribution, but the Rebels put them into the hands of Col. SANDERSON. Only a small part of them was distributed. I am confident that a part was given to the Rebels by SANDERSON, besides what they stole, and Col. SANDERSON appropriated to his own use a case of egg-nog that was marked for the Hospital."

**Corporal Taylor,** states that he—

"Saw Col. SANDERSON give some of the U. S. Clothing away to the Rebels, especially did he see the Col. give to one man an overcoat."

In answer to the charge, Col. SANDERSON produces the statements of several of his fellow officers, prisoners in Libby :

**R. C. Knaggs,** A. D. C. to Gen. Baxter says :—

"The distribution of the Sanitary Commission supplies was placed under the supervision of Capt. E. A. Fobes, C. S., without Lieut. Col. SANDERSON being cognizant of the fact, and I believe that the stores were distributed equally with the exception of (as I have been told by Capt. E. A. Fobes himself) that of Col. Di Cesnola, and Brig.-Gen. Neal Dow who received rather more than anyone else, the latter pleading destitution."

**Capt. E. A. Fobes,** C. S., says :—

"All Sanitary stores issued in Libby Prison passed through my hands, among other articles Col. SANDERSON had one box of egg-nog charged to him. Gen. Dow also received a large supply of stores and gave his acknowledgement for the same."

**1st Lieut. Thompson Lennig**, 6th Pa Cav'y., says :—

"Capt. Fobes made the distribution of the Sanitary goods, and I know that he was just and impartial."

It appears from the statement of P. H. Copland, President of the American Dessicating Company, that this "egg-nog" was a preparation of eggs, milk and sugar without any spirituous liquor.

**Heber Le Favor,** Col. 22nd Mich. Inft'y, says :—

"Of the other stores, [*i. e.* than clothing] I received quite a quantity through Capt. Fobes, and so far as I am aware, all of the officers received a portion of them."

Col. SANDERSON in his "answer" says, that he was one of a committe of five, and was specially assigned to the distribution of clothing on Belle Island, leaving to Cols. Von Schrader and Hunter and Capt. Chamberlain the exclusive care of the prisoners in Warehouse and Hospitals, and to Lt. Col. Boyd, the entire control of the accounts. A copy of the order appointing this "Board of Distribution" is filed with the papers of Col. SANDERSON'S defence and is marked "V." Col. SANDERSON further says :

"At first it was intended that all the Sanitary Commission supplies should be exclusively reserved for the sick, and for a long time this intention was scrupulously observed, but for reasons which I either never knew or have forgotten, it was suddenly determined by the other members of the Committee, during my absence, to divide them equally among the officers in the prison, who would be expected to pay to the Sanitary Commission on their release the cost of the articles allotted them."

He says he was prepared on his reaching home to pay for his box of egg-nog, but was informed that the Commission declined to receive pay, and he therefore spent the amount at the fair held for its benefit subsequently in New York, and continues :

"Like every other article of luxury, such as Condensed Milk, Canned Meats, Preserved Fruits and Jellies, and other articles of similar character, the box was branded 'hospital supplies.'"

The statement of Corporal Taylor is positively denied to be true by Col. SANDERSON, and is contradicted by Sergt. Toland and private Saurman, whose testimony is given above.

In view of the foregoing testimony, the Commission is of opinion that there is no evidence to support the charge of Misappropriation of Government Stores.

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CHARGE 3d—*Betrayal of a Plot to Escape.*

**Gen. Dow,** says :—

"Early last fall we had an arrangement nearly perfected for breaking out and capturing the city. We had about one thousand officers and about ten thousand soldiers, and were carefully guarded. Suddenly we saw two pieces of artillery planted near and bearing on us, and some companies of soldiery stationed in front of the prison. Soon we heard that Col. SANDERSON had betrayed us to the Rebels.

"The indignation of the officers was very great, but it was finally allayed upon assurances that there was no *intention* of communicating the secret beyond our own officers in the hospital. After Col. Streight's unsuccessful attempt to escape, he was put into a damp, dark and cold cell underground, in irons, and supplied only with corn bread and water. While he remained in that condition Col. SANDERSON told some Rebel Officers that Streight had organized a plan to break out, capture and destroy the city. This was told in the presence of some of our officers, of whom Capt. Atwood, I think, was one.

Lt. Col. Archer and Capt. Atwood were often with Col. SANDERSON at Belle Isle and saw a great deal of him."

It is a matter of regret that a charge so odious and damning as this, should, if true, rest only on the statement of one who says that he is not "personally cognizant of these matters." Gen. Dow intimates that Cols. Streight, and Archer and Capt. Atwood especially the first named officers, could substantiate the charge, but there is no evidence whatsoever from either of these officers in the papers submitted to this Commission.

There appears, on an examination of the evidence, some confusion as to what particular plan of escape is alluded to in the statement of Gen. Dow. Several appear to have been contemplated and discussed by a greater or smaller number of the officers.

Col. SANDERSON in his "statement" gives a clear but lengthy account of a plan to escape, which had grown into proportions from a suggestion made by him, when it was proposed to move the prisoners from Richmond to Salisbury, N. C. This statement is corroborated by many officers. The plan appears to have been as follows :

A few brave and prudent men out of about one thousand officers, were to be selected as field and line officers, under the direction of Col. Cesnola, the remaining officers were to be recruited under the seal of secrecy as non-commissioned officers and privates, each Captain selecting his company from his own associates, disclosing to each as much of the plan as would be necessary to insure his hearty co-operation, and willingness to drill punctually and obey orders. A map of Richmond was obtained, the location of depots of arms and artillery ascertained, the places of rendezvous of the Militia, and the residence of the principal officers of the Rebel Government noted.

It was thought that, with the co-operation of our forces on the Peninsular on a given day, the guard could be overpowered, the City seized, and the prisoners on Belle Island (10,000) released. Col. Streight, it appears, thought this method too slow, and with a few associates proposed, without waiting for

co-operation from our Government, to overpower the guard—at that time Pickett's Division—to fire the City if strong enough, and take the chances of escaping to the Union lines. Whilst the officers were discussing the merits of this scheme of Streight's, the extra force and guards spoken of in General Dow's communication was observed, and the officers apprised that a plan of escape had been betrayed to the rebels. Some of the enemies of Col. SANDERSON charged him with being the traitor, not openly, but in his absence, and behind his back. It will appear from the above, that no plan of escape had been fully decided upon, but that certain plans were under discussion,—that the rebels were not definitely informed of the details of the plot, as all extra guards were withdrawn after two days; and, as far as appears, any plan of escape that would have received the hearty co-operation of all the officers, would have been as likely to succeed after the betrayal as before. This consideration, however, would not in the least diminish the turpitude of an officer who would so basely betray his comrades.

It appears from the evidence, that while these plans of escape were under discussion, Col. SANDERSON was taken sick and sent to Hospital, and while there conversed on the subject of the escape with Colonels Powells and Nichols, and Captains Fisher and Skelton. From the communication of Capt. Skelton, it will be seen precisely who it was that betrayed the plan of escape:

**Capt. Skelton** says—

"I became acquainted with Lt.-Colonel JAMES SANDERSON in the month of July, 1863, in the Prison Hospital. I was introduced to him by Brig.-General Charles K. Graham, then a prisoner and wounded, lying in the Hospital, Lt.-Colonel SANDERSON being brought there sick. This, I believe, was in the month of October, 1863. He was not confined to bed, but moved about in the Hospital, and played and acted more the part of a nurse than a sick man. He was continually helping and attending to the wants of the wounded soldiers and officers, frequently giving them sums of money to purchase such luxuries as their appetites might crave. I never saw Colonel

SANDERSON in conversation with any of the rebel officers in the Hospital. I never heard any of my fellow-prisoners say the same, and I do not think while there in the Hospital that he ever visited the Surgeon's office ; if he had visited there, he would have had to pass down by my bed ; this I never saw him do. The Prison Hospital attendants were Federal prisoners, some prisoners of war and some citizen prisoners, such as sutlers, quartermasters, clerks, &c. Whilst he was in Prison Hospital, I had frequent conversations with Lt.-Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON, in one of which he mentioned to me of a plot among the Federal prisoners to escape *en masse* by striking down the guards, seizing the Richmond Arsenal, releasing the Federal prisoners on Belle Isle and other parts of the City, some 15,000 strong. He spoke encouragingly of the plan, and thought if there would be a unity of action among the Federal officers that it would meet with success. He also stated that Major-General Dix, then in command of the Union forces at Fortress Monroe, knew of the plan, and at the given time would co-operate with us with the forces under his command. At this time there was an attendant in the Hospital by the name of Wm. L. Vermillion, a citizen prisoner, who was captured on the Mississippi River, on the third day of May, 1863. I knew him before his capture in Keokuk, Iowa. When I heard of his being a prisoner in Richmond, I interceded in his behalf, and succeeded in getting him detailed as nurse in the Prison Hospital. I at that time had every confidence in him as a loyal man, believing him to be such, and thinking that no person who had suffered imprisonment by the Richmond officials could be anything else but loyal to the Federal Government.

" I revealed to him this plot on the part of the Federal officers to escape, as Lt.-Col. SANDERSON did to me, soon after Lt.-Col. SANDERSON left the Prison Hospital for the officer's quarters. There were two officers made their escape from the Prison Hospital, Wm. L. Vermillion at that time being allowed to pass from the officers' Prison Hospital to another Prison Hospital occupied by enlisted Federal prisoners, he usually going in company with a rebel soldier, the distance being a little more than one block. While passing from one hospital to the other he met these two officers—Major Hewston, I think, of the 133d N. Y. Vols., and Lieut. Von Wilson, of the 11th N. Y. Cavalry, they just having made their escape from the prison disguised in rebel uniform. On his return to the officers' Hospital, he reported the escape of these two officers to the rebel Surgeon in my hearing, he being in the Dispen-

sary and only a board partition between us. I could hear all that passed between them very distinctly. After the escape of these two officers, the Federal sick and wounded officers were taken back to the prison as a punishment for the escape of the two officers, the next morning after the escape was made.

'I never saw Wm. L. Vermillion after we were taken back to the prison, he being released and sent North by the rebel authorities soon afterwards. After he had gone, while in conversation with the rebel Surgeon in regard to the escape of these two officers, I mentioned to him that I overheard Vermillion report the same to him; he also told me he reported to Brig.-General Winder, Commissary General of Prisoners, the following day, of the contemplated plan of the Federal officers and prisoners of war to escape *en masse*.

"I was also informed the same by the rebel Hospital Steward, who stated that General Winder promised him his release for the information as regards this plot. After my escape, on my arrival in Washington, I published an account of Wm. L. Vermillion's revealing this plot, in the N. Y. *Herald* of Dec. 20th, 1863. I also stated the facts verbally to the Secretary of War."

That Col. SANDERSON was not generally believed to have betrayed his comrades, will appear from the evidence of the following officers:

**Col. Le Favor** says—

"I heard many persons state that they considered Col. SANDERSON one amongst others that disclosed the plan, but I have not heard of or seen one that could prove that such was the case, or one that would openly charge him with the guilt. On the contrary, I have heard as many state that they could not believe him guilty of such a crime, and from my knowledge of him I am led to the conclusion that it would be impossible for him to do such a mean act as to betray a fellow-prisoner, a soldier of the United States."

**Lieut. Col. Williams** says—

"He was at one time charged by somebody with disclosing to the rebels a plan to escape. Some excitement ensued, when the charge was circulated, and a meeting was called by some person or persons to take action in regard to it. Some of his enemies had prepared resolutions in advance to be passed by

the meeting, but, after diligent investigation, no shadow of evidence could be found to justify them, and the meeting adjourned, the general impression prevailing that the charge was malicious, and had been trumped up or manufactured by some of his squad of enemies to injure him in the estimation of his fellow-prisoners."

Several officers allude to the meeting mentioned above, in similar language.

**Capt. H. Reese Whiting** says—

"I knew of the McKee meeting in the prison ; at its close, many who had been enemies of Col. SANDERSON were his firm and steadfast friend The meeting was called, Col. SANDERSON was absent, and the affair was considered as a mean and dastardly attack upon an absent officer."

**Major John E. Clark** says—

"I remember a meeting was held in the middle room sometime in the month of January, at which I was told some charge had been brought against Col. SANDERSON, I think in his absence from the building, but I heard a considerable number of gentlemen of unquestioned loyalty (some among them by no means friendly to Col. S.) speak of it as a disgrace to all who were active in it. Such was also my opinion from what I could gather of the course there taken. I am not aware that those bringing charges against Col. SANDERSON on that occasion, ever brought any sufficient proof to substantiate them, though I think they were invited to do so, if they could."

**Major Wm. Russel, Jr.,** says—

"About the 15th of January an incident occurred which gave Col. SANDERSON'S enemies an opportunity to display themselves. A meeting was called without specifying the object, and when convened it was found to be for the purpose of condemning Col. SANDERSON for the perpetration of certain offences, of which proofs, when called for, were not forthcoming. This attempt to destroy an officer's character was so barefaced, so contemptible, and so cowardly (Col. S. being absent,) that a reaction took place and produced a more kindly feeling towards the Colonel than had existed during his imprisonment."

**Surgeon A. W. Whitney** says—

"I have heard *both* Col. SANDERSON and Col Streight accused of having divulged this plot to the enemy, the former by talking about the plans to his brother officers before one of the nurses of the hospital—the latter by sending a threatening message to Major Turner, the Commandant of the Prison, saying, 'Tell Turner he'll be d——d glad to see me, and that before long;' but I do not believe that either of these gentlemen would intentionally stoop so low as to betray the plans of their fellow-prisoners."

**Lieut. Col. A. F. Rogers** says—

"Col. SANDERSON was accused by some of the officious of betraying a plan of escape to the rebels. It was not believed by the better class of officers. I do not know by whom this charge was originated. I never heard of any one charging Col. SANDERSON with the act to his face, or willing to substantiate the charge by the slightest attempt at evidence."

**Lt. Col. John Henry** says:

"He (Col. SANDERSON) was accused of betraying a plan to escape, but no one ever had the effrontry to make the charge directly to him, and when sifted out it had no foundation."

**Col. Thomas E. Rose** says:

"I have heard him charged with having betrayed a plan of escape to the rebels, but this charge was perfectly groundless. It emanated from one or two of Col. SANDERSON'S enemies, who apparently did not hesitate at saying anything, whether true or false, against any one they disliked.

**Lt. Col. F. F. Cavada** says:

"I heard something of a plan to escape having been betrayed to the rebel authorities by Col. SANDERSON. As far as I know this did not extend beyond conjecture. I was then adverse to the opinion entertained by some of the prisoners that so base an act could have been perpetrated by any officer wearing the uniform of the United States. I have never seen anything since in the conduct of Col. SANDERSON to warrant this accusation against his loyalty. Col. SANDERSON had many enemies in the prison, and such a report concerning him was calculated to obtain credence in numerous quarters. I heard

the above charge repeatedly made against Col. SANDERSON, but no substantial evidence in support of it ever came to my knowledge."

There is testimony from several other officers to the same effect.

It appears from a careful review of all the evidence on this charge that among the large number of officers (over one thousand confined at Richmond, various plans of escape were discussed and two more or less matured. There was a want of unanimity and hearty co-operation in any definite plan; that which was deemed practicable and prudent by some, being characterized as being mad and foolhardy by others. Jealousies and rivalries were common, and the most absurd rumors obtained a ready credence. It was while plans to escape were being most actively discussed, that Col. SANDERSON was taken sick and carried to the hospital. A day or two after his return from the hospital the extra guards were placed around the prison, and the conviction obtained ground among the prisoners that they had been betrayed. Some of Col. SANDERSON'S enemies accused him of the crime, and the charge was busily circulated. It seems that no attempt was ever made to substantiate the charge by evidence, nor was its truth generally believed by the better class of officers. The statement of Capt. Skelton, given above, shows precisely who it was that gave information to the rebel authorities of the proposed plan, and fully exhonorates Col. SANDERSON from all blame in the matter.

The Commission, after a careful examination of all the evidence, are of opinion that the charge that Col. SANDERSON betrayed a plan of escape is without foundation; had its origin in the malice of his enemies, and is repeated by Gen'l Dow without sufficient evidence.

CHARGE 4TH—*Disloyalty.*

**Gen. Dow** says in his letter to Major General Hitchcock:

"The conviction among the officers generally was that he was disloyal; had little or no sympathy with *our* cause, but much for the rebels. Col. SANDERSON was constantly defend-

ing the rebels and justifying them in their treatment of our soldiers—averring that they were properly treated.

"Some of this I heard on one occasion, and interposed with the facts at Belle Isle which existed under his observation.

"Col. di Cesnola, for the last two or three months, held no communication whatever with him—so entire was his confidence of his infidelity to the country. He will gladly furnish any information in his possession, as he believes the good of the service requires Col. SANDERSON's dismissal from it. My conviction was that Col. SANDERSON had no sympathy with the Union cause. His conversation, so far as I knew of it, indicated a decided hostility to the administration and its measures; and certainly he manifested no kindly feeling towards our soldiers, who were suffering so much in their country's service. By our officers, generally, at Richmond, he was regarded with distrust. Very few of them had any intercourse with him, and great care was used to keep every matter from his knowledge that we wished to keep from the Rebels."

In answer to this charge, Col. SANDERSON gives a lengthy statement of his original entry into the service and subsequent military history. From this statement it would appear that, at the beginning of the war, Col. SANDERSON was holding a confidential and lucrative position in the New-York Hotel, "a celebrated sojourning place in New-York city for Southerners." The Colonel says that, after the attack on Fort Sumpter, his Southern sympathy and conservative views melted into thin air. Endorsed unanimously by the Union Defence Committee and by other prominent citizens of New-York, he sought employment in the Subsistence Department, and was one of *four* bidders for the first batch of Treasury notes. For this his employer dismissed him on one day's notice. Unsuccessful in an attempt to bring to the notice of the Secretary of War a plan for teaching the soldiers how to cook their rations, he returned to New-York and was authorized by Gov. Morgan to test the practicability of his plans in some of the New-York regiments.

It appears from the statement of Dr. E. Harris, U. S. Sanitary Commission, that he was "triumphantly" successful in the 15th N. Y. Failing in getting his plans approved by Congress, he accepted the position of Q. Master, 22d Mass. Vols.,

tendered him by the Hon. Henry Wilson. He soon after received his appointment as Commissary, and was assigned to duty with the late Gen. Wadsworth, with whom he remained until the General was assigned to the Military Governorship of Washington. He filled up his leisure time in the winter by preparing a book on Camp Cookery, which was published and distributed by the Government. He was Gen. McDowell's Chief Commissary of the First Corps. In July, 1862, on the recommendation of the same General, he was made Major and Add'l Aid-de-Camp ; and, on the recommendation of Major-Gen. John F. Reynolds, was, in January, 1863, promoted Lt. Colonel. He served with Gen. Hooker in the Antietam campaign, and with Generals Reynolds and Newton, at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg.

In proof of his patriotism and loyalty, Col. SANDERSON produces the testimony of various officers with whom he has served, and with whom he was associated in prison.

**Major Gen. Meade,** Commanding Army of the Potomac, says :—

"This is to certify to all whom it may interest, that I have known JAMES M. SANDERSON, late Lt. Col. in the Volunteer Subsistence Department, since the month of April, 1862, at which time he was serving as Chief of his Department in the First Corps, under the command of Major-Gen. I. McDowell. Afterwards I commanded, for a short period, the First Corps; and, subsequently, a Division in that Corps, under Gen. Reynolds, during which time Lt. Col. SANDERSON was Chief of his Department, in which position he remained till taken prisoner, about three weeks after the battle of Gettysburg. In all this time, my knowledge of Lt. Col. SANDERSON was to show him to be an active, intelligent officer, zealous in the discharge of his duties, and of distinguished gallantry on the field of battle —I being personally cognizant of his services at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg.

"I have frequently conversed with the officers with whom Col. SANDERSON immediately served, particularly Major-Gens. McDowell and Reynolds, and Brig.-Gen. Wadsworth; and uniformly heard these officers express themselves favorably of Col. SANDERSON. I never heard his loyalty or fidelity to his country questioned, and learned with equal regret and surprise

that charges of this character had been brought against him whilst a prisoner at Richmond.

"I am of the opinion that the past services and good conduct of Lt. Col. SANDERSON entitle him to a fair investigation, and trust the Government will grant the same."

**Major Gen. Hooker,** in a letter addressed to Col. SANDERSON says:—

"I commanded the First Corps during the Maryland campaign, until wounded at the battle of Antietam; and, from personal observation know you to have been as true to the policy of the Administration and to the Government as any officer in the Army. This was at a period when the policy of the Administration in regard to Slavery was discussed more openly and freely than at any other period of which I have knowledge. It affords me great pleasure to make this statement, for I fully remember the great satisfaction it gave me to meet with one whose views coincided with my own. This was at a period of the war when it seemed to be fashionable to entertain opposite opinions. Subsequently, I remember, we had many interviews in which this, with other topics, formed the subject of our conversation, which always resulted in the enhancement of my estimation of your loyalty. Indeed, I should as soon think of distrusting my own fidelity to the cause as yours.

"With respect to your conduct in battle and your ability and efficiency in the performance of your duties, it gives me no less pleasure to recur to them. In all regards, your official character and conduct were entirely satisfactory to me.

**B'vt Brig. Gen. Sharpe** says:—

"I have known Lt. Col. SANDERSON since May, 1849. I lived with him nearly two years at that time, and at intervals since; and, during that time, I never knew Col. SANDERSON to behave in a cruel or tyrannical manner to those under him. The servants always remained with him, and even followed him to other hotels. He always kept the servants under good discipline. I frequently made my home at the New-York Hotel, and particularly during the winter for several years. I understood, after Col. SANDERSON left the New-York Hotel, that the reason he left was on account of his open and very decided espousal of the Union party. This I learned from the old *habitués* of the Hotel, who had been there for several years,

like myself. I have discontinued going to the New-York Hotel on account of the Southern feeling that prevailed there.

"About three months ago, Col. SANDERSON wrote to me, saying he expected to have a hearing in his case; and I drew up a paper stating my knowledge of the Colonel, and my opinion of his loyalty. That paper received a very special endorsement from Gen. Patrick, in which he stated that Col. SANDERSON had served under his command; and he spoke from his personal knowledge of Col. SANDERSON'S character as a gentleman and his high efficiency in his Department. The paper also had a very warm endorsement from Gen. Seth Williams. Both of these endorsements were lengthy and special. The paper had a number of signatures: among others those of Gen. Hunt; Lt. Cols. Barton and Riddle; Major Cox, C. S.; Headquarters, Army of the Potomac. This paper bore strong testimony to Col. SANDERSON'S conduct as a gentleman and soldier, and, I remember, it was made a matter of special remark, that he always went into battle with his commanders. This paper was left to be forwarded by an officer at H. Qrs. Army of the Potomac, and I understood it was mailed from there and has miscarried.

"I think that those who knew Col. SANDERSON would say that he is impulsive. I do not think that Col. SANDERSON is what would be called a profane man, although I have heard him use profane language. My opinion of Col. SANDERSON is such that I would trust any interest I have in the world in his hands, and I have not the slightest doubt of his loyalty.

"I have never heard a doubt expressed of his loyalty; on the contrary, I have heard the utmost surprise expressed that he was charged with disloyalty."

**Col. Henry A. Morrow** says:—

"I have known Lt. Col. SANDERSON, as a soldier, for about two years. I think I was introduced to him by the late Brig-Gen. Wadsworth, who felt for him the liveliest feelings of regard.

"Col. SANDERSON was at this time attached to the staff of the late Major-Gen. Reynolds, in the capacity of Chief Commissary. I had occasion to meet Col. S. at various times and places during the spring of 1863, and immediately after the battle of Gettysburg, July 1863; I was in his company for several hours. The conversation at such a time naturally turned on the Rebellion, and the means adopted to put it down. Col. SANDERSON was positive and emphatic in his de-

nunciations of the Rebellion and every body and every thing connected with it. I do not remember ever to have heard any man denounce the Southern leaders in more caustic and bitter terms than did Col. S. on that occasion. He was especially severe on the institution of Slavery—which he declared to be the cause of all our troubles, and my recollection is that he favored the idea of settling the negroes on the lands in the West. I state this to show my recollection of this conversation. He repeated many times in the course of the conversation, that he believed the policy adopted by Mr. Lincoln to be constitutional, wise, and just; and he declared that, sooner than not subdue the Rebellion, he would make the South a wilderness and a desolation. I do not undertake to give the exact language of Col. S., but I remember that it was outspoken and terribly denunciatory.

"I have no doubt whatever, judging simply from what I have heard him say, that Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON is most loyal to the country and is as warm a friend to the policy of the Administration as is to be found anywhere. It is within my personal knowledge that he enjoyed the respect and confidence of that noble patriot, Gen. Wadsworth."

**Dr. E. Harris,** of the U. S. Sanitary Commission, referring to the services of Col. SANDERSON while with the 15th N. Y., previous to his appointment as Commissary, says:—

"At that time, and ever since, I had no doubt that you were prompted by the highest patriotism and humanity to undertake that work. Indeed, in the City of New-York, it was well known that you were, from the attack on Fort Sumpter, a bold and manly defender of our National cause, and ready to serve in the war in any way you could be most useful."

That the loyalty and support of the Administration of Col. SANDERSON were not diminished by his prison experiences, would appear from the certificates of the following officers, his companions in captivity.

**Col. C. W. Tilden,** 16th Me. Vols., says:—

"During the whole of my imprisonment, I was very intimate with Col. SANDERSON—messing with him, sleeping near him, joining with him in his evening amusements, conferring with him on business matters and on private affairs, and frequently

discussing political subjects—and I always found him a pleasant associate, ever ready to promote the interests of those about him ; ready and willing to give advice when required ; and a warm snpporter of the Administration, upholding the Government in its most vigorous and stringent efforts to crush the Rebellion. I never heard or knew of his expressing opinions adverse to this Administration or any of its measures, or any opinions antagonistical to the cause of Union and freedom. I never heard him express any opinion in favor of the South or its institutions ; on the contrary, I have heard him repeatedly express himself as being an open and avowed abolitionist. I never saw him on more intimate terms with Rebel officers than, in my opinion, was justifiable, or his duties as one of the Committee demanded. I did not consider him a disloyal man, neither was he so considered by a large number of the officers. I am knowing to the fact that he did as far as possible use his influence with the Rebel authorities to mitigate or ameliorate the rigors of our imprisonment, and that in some instances he was successful."

**Col. Heber LeFavour,** 22d Mich. Vols., says :—

"In many conversations with him [Col. S.] I have never heard him express any sentiment adverse to the Administration or its measures ; and, *per contra*, have heard him support it and its measures very ardently. By his conversation, I judged him to be a Republican, and quite Radical on the subject of the Abolition of Slavery. He was quick, impulsive, and at times imprudent in speech and actions ; but I cannot believe him guilty of disloyalty to the United States, nor of treachery to his fellow-prisoners ; and do not think there was a more loyal man in Libby Prison than he."

**Col. P. di Cesnola,** 4th N. Y. Cavalry, referring to the statement of Gen. Dow given above, that "Col. di'Ces-"nola, for the last two or three months, held no commu-"nication whatever with him, so entire was his conviction "of his infidelity to the country. He will gladly furnish "any information in his possession, as he believes the good "of the service requires Col. SANDERSON'S dismissal from "it," says :—

"I have never made such assertion, nor have I authorized any officer to make it in my name. The differences existing

between you and myself, if any existed, were of a private character, and were not in consequence of any change of opinion on my part concerning you. To accuse a man of being a traitor or disloyal to his country requires a great deal of evidence to show it, and I am happy to say I have never seen any such evidence which would justify me to call Col. SANDERSON with such names."

**Col. Thos. E. Rose,** 77th Pa. Vols., says :—

"I never heard him express sentiments, antagonistic to our Government or the Administration. I never heard him say anything, nor did I ever see anything in his conduct that would indicate that he sympathized with the Rebels or any of their institutions."

**Lt. Col. R. S. Northcott,** 12th W. Va. Vols., says :—

"I had frequent conversations with him in relation to the policy of our Government concerning the exchange of prisoners, and he uniformly expressed a cheerful acquiescence in that policy. I never heard him utter a word of complaint against his Government, but I frequently heard him rebuke others who were inclined to complain. I never heard Col. SANDERSON utter a word in favor of the Southern Confederacy. I well remember, that at the time the Rebel authorities at Richmond refused to recognize Gen. Butler as Commissioner of Exchange, that he expressed his indignation to me in the strongest terms. I do not recollect all that he said to me at the time, but I remember his excusing the conduct of Gen. Butler in his Military Administration at New Orleans, and also of his saying that the Rebels, who were nothing but a set of *outlaws* themselves, had no right to decide any other man in Christendom an outlaw, and that our Government would be justifiable in breaking off all intercourse with the Rebels by flag of truce boat until they did recognize Butler, and that as a prisoner, he (SANDERSON) would be willing to endure any suffering that might result from such a course on the part of our Government."

**Lt. Col. Jere Williams,** 25th Ohio Vols., says :—

"During a great part of the time that we both were there, [Libby Prison,] we were in the same room, and were necessarily often together. During our stay there, I never heard him express any opinion adverse to our Government or its

measures; nor ever did I hear him speak of the Confederacy, except in terms of condemnation, sometimes very strong.

"He conducted himself at all times, so far as I could learn, as a zealous Union man and as a strong supporter of the Government. I am very decidedly of opinion that, instead of censure, he should receive commendation and thanks for his efforts in behalf of the wretched inmates of Libby."

**Lt. Col. Frederick F. Cavada,** 114th Pa. Vols., says :—

"I never heard anything, whilst in the Libby or since I left it, that could induce me to believe in the report that Col. SANDERSON was a traitor to the Government under which he served."

**Col. B. F. Fisher,** U. S. Signal Corps, says :—

"I never heard him express any opinion adverse to our Government or its measures, or express any sympathy for the Confederacy or its institutions. He was not considered disloyal by the better class of officers or shunned in consequence."

**Lt. Col. A. F. Rogers,** 80th Ill. Vols., says :—

"From what I saw and knew of Col. SANDERSON, I would consider him a loyal man, and not opposed to the present Administration and its measures, and not in sympathy with the Rebellion. I consider Col. SANDERSON more deserving of *praise* than *censure* for his efforts in behalf of his comrades."

**Lt. Col. John Henry,** 5th Ohio Cavalry, says :—

"I was, while a prisoner, very intimate with Lt. Col. SANDERSON, and had many conversations with him on literary and political subjects. Heard his views on the Rebellion, but never heard him express any sympathy for those engaged in it; on the contrary, he was very bitter against all Rebels."

**Major J. Harris Hooper,** 15th Mass. Vols., says :—

"During my acquaintance with Lt. Col. SANDERSON, (which was of an intimate character,) I never heard him give expression to any sentiments adverse to the U. S. Government or its measures, or in any way favorable to the Rebel Government or its institutions; and I never heard or saw anything that caused me to believe him other than a thoroughly loyal man."

**Major Wm. Russell, Jr.,** A. A. G. Mid. Mil. Div., says :

"I have had frequent discussions with Col. SANDERSON on the subject of politics, and have heard him express himself on the questions at issue ; but I never heard him express any sentiments adverse to the Administration or its measures, or say anything in favor of the Confederacy or its institutions. On the contrary, he avowed himself openly as an Abolitionist, and went further in his devotion to the Administration than was concurred in by many of his hearers."

**Major J. E. Clark,** 5th Mich. Cav., says :—

" I never heard him express sentiments adverse to the Government or its measures, or favorable to the Confederacy or its institutions ; nor did I suspect him of entertaining such sentiments."

Lt. Col. CHARLES FARNSWORTH'S testimony is in nearly the same words.

**Surgeon A. W. Whitney,** 13th Mass. Vols., says :—

" I never heard him express sentiments hostile to the Administration or its measures, or show the slightest sympathy with the so-called Southern Confederacy or its institutions. He was *not* shunned by the better class of officers on account of his disloyalty ; on the contrary, his society was much sought after. I believe him to be as loyal as Gen. Neal Dow, and as patriotic as Col. Streight—without the whine of the former, or the bluster of the latter. From my knowledge of Col. SANDERSON previous to his capture, and his present reputation in the Corps. I do not believe him capable of treachery to his comrades, treason to his Government, or inhumanity to any creature however lowly. While in prison, I believe, he was one of the few officers who did not growl and complain because the U. S. Government did not effect exchanges more rapidly."

**Capt. Ralph O. Ives,** 10th Mass. Vols., says :—

"As regards Mr. SANDERSON, whom I have known for ten years, I give it as my belief that he is and always has been a perfectly loyal man, who would not in any wise give aid or comfort to the enemy ; that my relations with Mr. SANDERSON were of the most intimate character; that we messed together,

slept side by side; in short, we were constantly in each other's society; that, in all my intercourse with him, (and I was honored with his perfect confidence,) I never heard him express a sentiment of sympathy with a rebel or with their cause; or ever knew of his doing anything that might be construed into sympathy—not that he was blatant in his abuse of the rebel authorities, which was equally puerile and in bad taste by a prisoner, but that he always protested against harsh usage; and frequently by his quiet, manly, and dignified remonstrance saved his fellow-prisoners from abuse."

**Capt. Edward A. Mass,** 88th Pa. Vols., says:—

"I heard him on one occasion conversing with a rebel citizen, (I was told he was an editor,) and that conversation was strongly loyal, and against Southern treason in every shape and form."

**Capt. Edward A. Fobes,** C. S. 2d Div. Cav. Corps, says:

"On several occasions I have heard him speak boldly and openly to Confederate officers when his own Government was maligned or its policy misrepresented. His sentiments, as expressed in prison, led me to think him thoroughly loyal to his country and its cause."

Similar testimony as to his loyalty, in some cases expressed in much stronger language, is given by

Captain Martin Tower, 13th Mass. Vols.
" E. McB. Timoney, 15th U. S. Infantry.
" George H. Starr, 104th N. Y. Vols.
" J. M. McComas, 9th Md. Vols.
" E. Charlier, 157th N. Y. Vols.
" S. G. Hamlin, 134th N. Y. Vols.
" H. Rees Whiting, 24th Mich. Vols.
Adj't P. Owen Jones, 2d N. Y. Cavalry.
" N. McEvoy, 3d Ill. Cavalry.
First Lt. R. C. Knaggs, A.D.C. to Gen. Baxter.
Sec'd Lt. Harland Richardson, 19th Ind. Vols.
Sec'd Lt. Geo. D. Bisbee, 16th Me. Vols.
Acting Master W. E. H. Fentress, U. S. Navy.

The only evidence against the loyalty of Col. Sanderson

in the papers before the Commission, is contained in the statement of Gen. Dow, as above quoted. Attention is called to the fact that the alleged disloyal utterances of Col. SANDERSON were not made, the most of them, in the presence of Gen. Dow, but his opinion of the disloyalty of Col. SANDERSON was founded upon what others told him. He specially mentions Col. Cesnola as saying that Col. SANDERSON was disloyal and ought to be dismissed the service.

Col. Cesnola, in his statement given above, denies ever having made such an assertion, or authorized any officer to make it for him. The testimony of officers of the highest rank, who knew Col. SANDERSON previous to his imprisonment, is explicit as to his open and avowed loyalty. Among these officers are Major-Generals Meade, Hooker, Reynolds, McDowell, and the late Brig.-General Wadsworth. The testimony of his fellow-prisoners is uniform to the point that he was emphatic, while in prison, in his support of the Administration and its measures. The testimony is cumulative and conclusive to the point that, while in prison, Col. SANDERSON expressed himself as a thoroughly loyal man, and a warm supporter of the Administration and its measures.

After a careful consideration of all the testimony, the Commission is of opinion that the charge of disloyalty is utterly without foundation.

The above are all the charges brought against Col. SANDERSON by Gen. Neal Dow and Corporal Taylor, and in the opinion of the Commission a satisfactory defence is made to them all. Much additional testimony, however, is contained in the papers for the defence, and for a thorough understanding of the case, it will be necessary to show the duties Col. SANDERSON was called upon to perform while in prison, and how, while in the proper performance of these duties, he aroused opposition and made enemies.

The rooms in which they were confined at Libby Prison, were divided and known as the "Eastern Department" and "Western Department," into the former of which Col. SANDERSON and his companions were put. The Eastern Depart-

ment was under the direction of Col. C. W. Tilden, 16th Me., and the Western Department under A. D. Streight. Col. SANDERSON having been a hotel keeper, and having some reputation as a cook, was selected as kitchen director of the Eastern Department.

**Major Wm. Russell,** A. A. G. M. M. Div., says :—

"Soon after our arrival Col. SANDERSON was requested to assume direction and supervision of the culinary arrangements of the department, which he did greatly to the advantage of all parties, introducing a system and regularity unattainable under any other circumstances.

"His duties were to teach the mess cooks how to prepare their rations, arranging the hours and mode of occupying the stoves and tables, and settling all disputes in relation thereto, arising between the various parties engaged in cooking and setting the tables. The situation was a most trying one, and demanded the greatest amount of patience, good temper, and impartiality ; and was calculated to make many enemies for its occupant. No man gave more trouble or called upon Col. S. more frequently than Capt. Atwood. So well did this system work, however, that we became the envy of the adjoining department, known as "Streight and Milroy's," and efforts were made to obtain an unanimous invitation to Col. SANDERSON to undertake the supervision of their kitchen, but the scheme failed."

Many other officers testify to the same effect, not only to the value of Col. SANDERSON'S services, but also that the position was calculated to make the Colonel many enemies, and did make enemies. In a political discussion, Col. Streight took occasion to fasten a quarrel upon Col. SANDERSON, and abused him in a shameful manner.

**Col. Rogers,** who was present, says :—

"Every officer that heard it censured Col. Streight. After the difficulty Col. Streight was a persistent enemy of Col. SANDERSON."

The testimony is unanimous that the personal bearing of Col. SANDERSON, while in prison, was courteous, affable and

gentlemanly, and that he was ever ready to perform kind offices for his fellow prisoners.

**Col. Tilden** says :—

"He was noted for keeping sundry little conveniences on hand for those less provident, and in many instances I have known officers to call on him for favors of this kind, who on former occasions had abused him, and he was always ready to meet their request if in his power."

**Lt. Jones,** Adj't 2d N. Y. Cav., after testifying to the numberless acts of kindness performed by Col. SANDERSON towards his fellow-prisoners, says :—

"I have yet to learn an instance where he refused anything that was in his power to do, or give either to friend or foe, when applied to."

Very many of the officers testify that Col. SANDERSON lent them money on various occasions, and that he lent money to several officers to enable them to escape from prison.

It would seem from the statement of Col. Rose, that Col. Streight himself was enabled to escape by means of money loaned by Col. SANDERSON.

He says :—

"Major McDanald borrowed money from Col. SANDERSON, by which he and Col. Streight effected their escape from Richmond."

And he says very justly :

"These officers would not have entrusted Col. SANDERSON with the secret if they had suspected him of treachery."

Major MCDANALD corroberates the statement of Col. Rose. Col. Rose is Col. of the 77th Regt. Penn. Vols., and was, according to his own account—

"The originator of that scheme (the tunnel) and the leader of it throughout."

He says Col. Streight knew nothing of the tunnel until after he had been working at it for more than a month.

At the time Longstreet's Corps was passing through Richmond to reinforce Bragg, Col. SANDERSON offered five hundred dollars to any officer who would escape and convey the intelligence to our Government.

The kindness and consideration of Col. SANDERSON for his fellow-prisoners was shown when he left Libby Prison.

**Major Russell** says :—

"When about to be exchanged, Col. SANDERSON divided among his companions and messmates everything he was possessed of in the shape of books, clothing, bedding and subsistence, amounting to over two hundred dollars, if not more, carrying away with him the contents of a haversack and one blanket."

His conduct in this particular was in marked contrast to that of his principal accuser, Gen. Dow, who, according to his own account, carried away from Libby "two large trunks."

That Col. SANDERSON was an active and efficient officer is undisputed, and abundantly appears from the evidence in the case. Attention is called to the statements of Genl's. Meade and Hooker, who both testify to his distinguished gallantry on the field of battle. It appears that he always insisted on going into battle with his Commanding General.

After a very careful and thorough consideration of all the evidence in this case, the Commission is of opinion that there is not a shadow of foundation for the charges of Misappropriation of Government Stores, or Disloyalty.

With regard to the charge of cruel treatment of our prisoners at Belle Isle, the Commission is of opinion that Col. SANDERSON, though strict in the enforcement of discipline, is innocent. The testimony shows conclusively that Col. SANDERSON was active and untiring in alleviating the sufferings and promoting the interests of his fellow-prisoners, whether enlisted men or commissioned officers.

The Commission is of opinion that the conduct of Col. SANDERSON while a prisoner in Richmond deserves praise and not

censure, and they respectfully recommend, that the order dismissing him from the service be revoked.

(Signed)

JOHN C. CALDWELL,
*Brig.-Gen. U. S. Vols.,*
*Prest. Com.*
GEORGE. A. H. BLAKE,
*Col. 1st U. S. Cav'y.*

GEORGE H. CALDWELL.
*Capt. & A. A. G., Recorder.*

*Office Military Commission,*
302 "H," St., Cor. 17th,
WASHINGTON, Aug. 17, 1865.

(Official Copy.)
GEORGE H. CALDWELL,
*Capt. & A. A. G., Recorder.*

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WAR DEPARTMENT,
*Adjutant General's Office,*
WASHINGTON, June 8th, 1865.

SPECIAL ORDERS,
No. 288.

[*Extract.*]

* * * * * * * * *

17. Paragraph 19 of Special Orders No. 272 from this office, dated June 2, 1865, is hereby amended to read as follows :

"The Military Commission, to whom the case of Lieutenant-Colonel JAMES M. SANDERSON, Major, additional Aide-de-Camp; and Captain, Commissary of Subsistence, United States Volunteers, was referred for investigation and report, having made their report, to the effect that Lt.-Col. SANDERSON'S conduct, while a prisoner at Richmond, deserves *praise* rather than *censure*, and recommending that the order dismissing him

from service be revoked. Paragraph 7 of Special Orders, No. 207, from this Office, dated June 23, 1864, is by direction of the President, hereby revoked and annulled, to take effect May 27, 1865.

* * * * * * *

By order of the Secretary of War.
E. D. TOWNSEND,
*Assistant Adjutant General.*

(Official.)
E. D. TOWNSEND,
*Assistant Adjutant General.*
Lieut.-Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON—Present.

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WAR DEPARTMENT,
*Adjutant General's Office,*
WASHINGTON, June 19, 1865.

SPECIAL ORDERS,
No. 315.

[*Extract.*]

* * * * * *

53. By direction of the President, so much of Special Orders, No. 288, Paragraph 17, from this office, dated June 8, 1865, as re-instates Lieutenant-Colonel JAMES M. SANDERSON, Major and Additional Aid-de-Camp, is hereby amended so as to restore him without loss of pay.

* * * * * *

By order of the Secretary of War,
E. D. TOWNSEND,
*Ass't Adj. Gen'l.*

(Official)
E. D. TOWNSEND,
*Ass't Adj. Gen'l.*
Lt. Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON,
No. 129 Remsen St.,
Brooklyn, N. Y

WAR DEPARTMENT,
*Adjutant General's Office,*
WASHINGTON, Aug. 15, 1865.

SPECIAL ORDERS,
No. 440.

[*Extract.*]

29. Under the provisions of General Orders No. 79, May 1, 1865, from this Office, the services of the following named officers being no longer needed, they are hereby honorably mustered out of the service of the United States. They will receive no final payments until they shall have satisfied the Pay Department that they are not indebted to the United States.

Lt. Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON, Major, Additional Aid-de-Camp and Captain, Commissary of Subsistence, U. S. Volunteers.

By order of the Secretary of War,
E. D. TOWNSEND,
*Ass't Adj. Gen'l.*

(Official)
E. D. TOWNSEND,
*A.A. G.*

# AN EPISODE.

During the last session of the so-called Confederate Congress, a committee of that body made a report, in answer to the charge of cruelty to prisoners, of which the following is an extract :—

THE FEDERAL COL. SANDERSON'S TESTIMONY.

"In connection with this point, your committee refer to the testimony of a Federal officer, Col. JAS. M. SANDERSON, whose letter is annexed to the deposition of Maj. Turner. He testifies to the full delivery of the clothing and supplies from the North, and to the humanity and kindness of the Confederate officers, specially mentioning Lt. Bossieux, commanding the Belle Isle. His letter was addressed to the President of the United States Sanitary Commission, and was beyond doubt received by him, having been forwarded by the regular flag of truce. Yet the scrupulous and honest gentlemen composing that Commission have not found it convenient for their purposes to insert this letter in their publication. Had they been really searching for the truth, this letter would have aided them in finding it."

Also the subjoined :—

* * * "And this is confirmed by the Federal Colonel SANDERSON, who states that the average number of deaths per month, on Belle Isle, was from "two to five—more frequently the lesser number." The sick were promptly removed from the Island to the hospitals in the city."

From the introduction as published in the New-York *Tribune*, from which the above are taken, I learn that the accompanying documents, including Maj. Turner's deposition and my letter, were destroyed by fire. As the deductions drawn from that letter are false and calculated to injure me in the estimation of my friends, I deem it my duty to place the missing document on record for the purpose of showing the bad

faith of the committee in question, and to enable those sufficiently interested, to deduce from my own words precisely what I did say.

In order to obtain a proper understanding of the reasons which impelled me to write the letter aforesaid, I would simply state, that whilst a prisoner I was unfortunate enough to lose my wife—my companion in life for twenty-five years, whose last expiring moments were embittered by the thoughts of my suffering, as seen through the darkly colored recitals of returning prisoners. Sorrowing for this unnecessary grief, I accidentally became possessed of certain information, which I thought it my duty to convey at once to some one through whom it might be spread broadcast throughout the North, and happily relieve the mental woes of thousands similarly situated. I was also desirous of correcting what I conceived was an accidental error, obtaining great currency at home, in regard to the disposition of the clothing and supplies sent us by the Government and the various charitable societies, which was causing much ill-feeling and some inconvenience, as the Confederate authorities refused to issue even our private boxes until it was corrected.

Having, as I supposed, a sufficiently intimate acquaintance with the Rev. Henry W. Bellows, the eminent divine and popular President of the U. S. Sanitary Commission, I selected him as the most fitting person to whom such a communication should be addressed; arguing that, as a minister of the Gospel, and an official disseminator of the truth, he would gladly avail himself of the opportunity to pour oil on the troubled waters and correct a needless error; but, for reasons of sufficient validity in his judgment, he declined to publish the document —leaving for our enemies to do so, with their own deductions for his refusal. Luckily, among the very few articles brought with me from my prison-house were the notes from which the letter in question was compiled; and, although I am unable to give a copy *verbatim*, *literatim*, *et punctuatim*, the following is sufficiently near it to answer all necessary purposes :—

"Rev. W. H. Bellows,
*Pres. U. S. Sanitary Comm'n,*
Washington, D. C.

"Dear Sir: You will doubtless be somewhat surprised on learning that I have resumed my connection with the Sanitary Commission in this unexpected locality, and hold my appointment from the Confederate authorities—who, for the purpose of ensuring and systematizing the delivery of clothing, subsistence, and hospital stores, so bountifully furnished by the U. S. Government, The Christain Aid Society of Philadelphia, The Baltimore American Relief Fund, and your own most munificent and praiseworthy association, have selected five Federal officers, (myself being of the number,) to whom is assigned the pleasing duty; and, since the tenth of November, a majority of them have been continuously engaged in its performance.

"On Belle Island, the principal depot of the Federal prisoners, over six thousand (6,000) men have been inspected and furnished with articles of clothing—a large number receiving as many as *six* different garments each. In the city prisons and hospitals about four thousand (4,000) more have been similarly appareled, and twenty-eight hundred (2,800) outfits forwarded to Danville to meet the necessities of those confined there. The clothing distributed above, was mainly furnished by the Government and your Commission; and comprised shoes, socks, drawers, pants, coats, shirts, great coats, or blankets and caps.

"The subsistence received from our Government was not confided to our charge, nor have we any direct control of the hospital stores from the different charitable societies; although we have ample opportunities of seeing large quantities distributed at the various hospitals. A strict account, however, as we are informed, is being kept by the officials in charge for the purpose of showing its disposition.

"On Sunday last, a portion of the Board visited the hospitals for the purpose of obtaining personal knowledge of their condition and requirements, and decide how much of the very liberal donation (two thousand dollars U. S. currency) placed at our disposal by Brig.-Gen. James S. Wadsworth, should be invested for the sick and wounded. Whilst engaged in this scrutiny I had an opportunity of inspecting the books kept at the principal hospital (in which are included the statistics of all the others, known as prison hospitals,) and made the following memoranda, which I send you for the purpose of correcting the exaggerations so prevalent at this moment through-

out the North, commencing, as you will observe, with the month of June, and ending with the past month of November. As accessory to the condensed statement, Dr. Wilkins, the Surgeon-in-Chief, keeps a detailed account of every death—embracing the name, age, profession, rank, company, regiment, place of residence, date, and cause of mortality that has occurred since he assumed charge.

| | Month. | No. of Deaths. | Av. No. treated daily. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1863. | June, | 2 | 55 |
| | July, | 13 | 85 |
| | August, | 6 | 100 |
| | September, | 24 | 105 |
| | October, | 115 | 500 |
| | November, | 346 | 1050 |
| | Total, | 506 | |

"This does not include Belle Isle, where, as I learn from unofficial sources, the average number of deaths for some time past ranges from twelve to fifteen, more frequently the lesser number; on one occasion the number reached thirteen, but at no time has it exceeded these figures. The number of graves amount by actual count to seventy-eight. The number of prisoners confined here since the first of August, has averaged from four thousand to sixty-seven hundred, the latter being the present count.

"Of the officer in charge of the Island, Lieut. V. Bossieux, I cannot speak too highly. His humanity, his kindness of heart and untiring efforts to secure the comfort and well-being of those placed in his keeping, entitle him to our highest respect and thanks.

"It is perhaps unfortunate that there is no regular hospital on the Island for the treatment of the several cases, especially as a rise in the river renders it almost impossible to convey them at the short notice (sometimes required) to the regular hospital intended for them in the city. This deficiency cannot but conduce in certain cases to fatal results, although I am not prepared to refer to any such at present.*

"It is a source of deep regret, that the unnecessary and exaggerated accounts so widely disseminated by the Chaplains and Surgeons, who, with zealous haste abandoned us, sick and in prison to our sins and sorrows, have been permitted to re-

* This deficiency was remedied within forty-eight hours after my letter was written.

main so long uncontradicted. To them we owe entirely the late order prohibiting the further receipt of clothing and subsistence; and whilst we may in charity accord to them the merit of striving to benefit us, the result evinces the truth of the well known expression,

"Save us from our friends."

The misstatement as to the disposition of the clothing and subsistence being officially corrected, it is to be hoped, the *amende honorable* being made, that a like liberal reversal of orders may ensue.

"Prison life, at best, is not desirable, nor can men deprived of liberty, think amiably of their keepers. That many of us are suffering deeply and grievously cannot be denied, but that we as a body are suffering more deeply or more grievously than any brave or patriotic man or officer should be prepared to do for his cause or his country, I will not for an instant allow.

"In common with my fellow-prisoners I am most anxious to return to the comforts of home and those I love, but I disdain being deemed a martyr for the sufferings undergone in Libby or claim that my Government should recede one inch from a well taken position for any such considerations; and although I do not speak for any other than myself, I know of many gentlemen who thoroughly coincide with me. Believing that the information I give you will justify the length of my communication I make no apology for it but subscribe myself,

Very respectfully
Your obed't serv't.
J. M. SANDERSON,
*Lt.-Col. A. D. C. & C. S.*

How anything in that letter can be construed into an admission of "the full delivery of the clothing and supplies," I cannot understand; nor do I concede that by "specially mentioning Lt. Bossieux, Commanding the Belle Isle," I was at all endorsing the conduct of any other official.

That we delivered twelve thousand eight hundred suits of clothing admits of no denial; but was that all that was sent from the North? And, in reference to the subsistence, I can only repeat the words of my letter, that "although we had ample opportunities of seeing large quantities distributed at the various hospitals," we also had good reason to believe that equally large quantities were distributed elsewhere.

As regards the discrepancy as to the number of deaths on Belle Island, between the committee's report and my notes, I confess that I am at a loss to reconcile or understand it. It may arise from a clerical error, but if there were *seventy-eight* graves of persons who had died during the space of six months, the commonest acquaintance with arithmetic might have taught these astute gentlemen that there was a mistake somewhere. But coupled as it is with so many other misstatements, I am compelled perforce to ascribe it simply and solely to their inability or unwillingness to speak the truth.

As a matter of history it may be proper to state that my first letter, in which this subject of the number of deaths was much more unfavorably treated, was stopped by the Confederate authorities, who required me to show whence I drew my information that "from two to five were dying daily on Belle Island." On learning that it was based entirely on the statements of the men on the Island, I was shown the official returns made by Lieut. Bossieux to his commanding officer; but as the disparity was so great, I refused to receive it as authentic, and for several days held my letter in abeyance, undesided whether to forward it secretly or suppress it altogether. At length, it occurred to me that a visit to the graveyard itself might settle definitively the mooted point, and on mentioning the idea to Major Turner, he immediately gave orders to have my companion and myself taken thither. Having satisfied myself by inquiry and examination that each grave contained but a single corpse, I was obliged to modify my statement in accordance with the evidence thus presented me, and thus corrected again sent forward my letter for transmission. After examining it; I was requested by the authorities to retain it for a single day, and then make such modifications as circumstances would justify. On my succeeding visit to the Island, I was carried by Lieut. Bossieux, to inspect the new hospital accomodations then in process of erection, and introduced to the Surgeon that day assigned to duty. Of course, the desired correction was made, and my letter finally forwarded to its destination. Why it was not published is for others to explain; what I had written was stated in good

faith, and based on what I deemed proper and conclusive evidence. My objects were to correct error, assuage needless grief, obtain some mitigation of severe and unnecessary restriction, and show to the enemy that some of us at least, were not afraid to speak or to hear the truth ; and although I was foiled in my intentions, I feel now, as then, that they were praiseworthy and beneficial.

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## To NEAL DOW,

*Ex-Brig.-Gen. of Volunteers, and Philanthrophist*, OUT OF PLACE.

> "Hath vice a
> Charter got, that none must rise, but such, who
> Of the devil's faction are? The way to
> Honor is not evermore the way to
> Hell ; a virtuous man may climb."

SIR :

That you should have thrown the whole weight of your great ire upon so quiet a person as myself, not only excites my wonder, but provokes the astonishment of those to whom you are best known. An humble.individual, I cannot but be flattered at the intense interest exhibited in my "sayings and doings," which, to all but yourself, I fear, must have appeared "flat, stale and unprofitable." But says the poet,

> "They oft'times take more pains
> Who look for pins, than those who find out stars."

and doubtless the man who impales the gnat conceives himself as profitably employed as he who hunts the elephant; that a Brigadier-General of so distinguished a name, however, should have busied himself with my affairs, to the exclusion of other and graver duties, is both inexplicable and flattering. Your great merits as a would-be reformer were not unknown

to me, for among my earliest business recollections is engrafted the name of NEAL DOW, and the "Maine Liquor Law;" and although a thousand miles intervened between us, and our specialties were antagonistic, I did not withhold a limited admiration for one whose efforts I supposed to be earnest and sincere. Temperate myself, I could pleasurably partake of "the goods the Gods give us" without excess and without alloy: but unfortunately there are those among us who are not so happily constituted, and to reform these I hoped your labors would be efficacious. Your law being sumptuary, and therefore open to censure, was nevertheless philanthropic and aimed ostensibly at the public good. It was tried, and failed, but you achieved your end by riding into public notoriety, although on a weak-kneed-hobby. When this accursed rebellion broke out, as a prominent politician of the dominant party, you were an early applicant for high military honors. A soldier neither by constitution or training, you mistook your calling, and no friend loved you enough to correct your error. As Colonel of a regiment, you might have been profitably employed in civic duties, without displaying too much, your ignorance; but fascinated by the glare of command, you sought and obtained, undeservedly higher rank.

"It is an unfortunate thing for fools, that their pretensions should rise in an inverse ratio with their abilities, and their presumption with their weakness."

You did not belie the sentiment. It is perhaps, not becoming in me to dwell too minutely on your actions 'ere we met; but I may mention, as a matter of history, that your eagerness to get *in* to the only fight in which you were ever engaged, was barely excelled by your haste to get *out* of it: and it has been suggested that having forgotten something, your ardor in its recovery carried you so far to the rear that the enemy found you quite out of your own lines, like

"Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
And falls on the *other* side."

Thrown, during my military life, into constant association

with such men as Wadsworth, Reynolds, Meade, and others, (then but Brigadier-Generals,) my standard of that rank was high ; and, I confess, I was quite unprepared for the specimen for the first time presented me in prison. Shortly after my arrival in Libby, whilst watching with curious eye scenes so novel and characters so queer, my attention was drawn to a little man, armed with a huge hammer, who, ever and anon sinking from view, belabored the floor with heavy blows. Amused at the extreme seriousness infused into this apparently aimless operation, I at length inquired of a bystander what that little man was doing.

"Driving nails," was the curt reply.

"He 's a carpenter, then ?"

"No, Sir ; he 's a Brigadier-General. That 's Neal Dow."

All efforts on the part of the Confederates having for their object your exchange for a certain number of pianos, (alleged to have been "appropriated to your own use,") coming to naught, you were sent to Mobile, as we were informed, for trial. There you remained for more than four months ; returning to us, as I remember, in the last week of October, with "a light heart and a thin pair of breeches."

As has been stated already in my defence, some flunkey (Atwood, I believe,) suggested your being taken into our mess, as being the best in the prison, and therefore most suitable for a Brigadier-General ; but, not being able to see it in that light, I decidedly objected. That you were made acquainted with my reasons for this refusal—that you were neither an officer nor a gentleman,—any one cognizant of Atwood's propensities cannot for an instant doubt. That you should be angry, and desire to hold no further intercourse with me is neither to be wondered at nor criticised. *Two* people were pleased. Necessity subsequently compelled me to apply to you for what I was perfectly entitled to. Your conduct on each occasion was short and discourteous. Undeterred by your ungentlemanly manner, I persisted until successful. I owe you no thanks, as I asked no favor ; and no one admires a mule simply for his bray.

Selected by your own Government as the most proper per

son (because the ranking officer) to distribute its generous bounty to its suffering soldiers, you were taken to Belle Isle, by the Confederates, with something, for them, of deference and respect. An ambulance, as I heard, was provided, and you were permitted to address the men without restraint. The incident, as related to me, was characteristic. Mounting the highest point on the parapet, you asked attention, and thus delivered yourself :—

"*Comrades and Fellow-soldiers!* I have come here at the request of your Government and my own to inquire into your grievances, and redress your wrongs. I have a large amount of food and clothing sent me by our good rulers at home for distribution among you all. There is, I believe, an ample supply, with the expectation of more coming ; and I want all of you who are naked or hungry, to come to me. Come one, come all!"

*And they came!* Five thousand half naked and half starved sufferers, with piles of well-filled boxes almost within their grasp, needed no second invitation. Pouring forth from tents, and holes, and burrows, they pressed on every side. Surging and swaying like waves of the sea, they trampled and crushed each other, whilst striving to reach the narrow exit, until the weaker dropped from exhaustion, or were borne unresistingly along ; you, in the meanwhile, wringing your hands like a frightened child at this tempest of your own raising. Fortunately, the Commandant of the Island, Lt. Bossieux, in spite of his fear that this living flood would carry away all obstructions, succeeded in driving back the out-cropping crowd, without injury to a man. After this evidence of your forensic powers, any further exhibition thereof was pretermitted. "Of these matters I am not personally cognizant, but think they can be substantiated "by better testimony than that adduced by you to my desired ruin." At all events, the incident is so semblable that we may say with the Italians—

"Si non e vero, e ben trovato."

Impressed by the sufferings of the unfortunate on that

prison Isle, you very properly sought to obtain some amelioration of its horrors. To effect this, you addressed a protest to Gen. Winder, which (as you yourself have stated) was couched in strong and earnest language—so strong and so earnest that it gained *for you*, at least, relief. Taking into consideration the fact that thousands of your fellow-creatures were most deeply interested in the success of your efforts, it may be regarded by the thoughtless and uninitiated as being unfortunate that your Roman firmness and Spartan stoicism would not permit you to unbend at this momentous instant; but, with the keen instincts of a shrewd politician, you felt that it would have ruined you in the eyes of your blatant associates, had you yielded an iota of derision and scorn, of crimination and defiance to the common foe; and, in order to enjoy the political honors of supposed martyrdom at home, you gained for your comrades the physical endurance of real martyrdom there. With this hope you had your say; and, as a consequence, *you* were relieved, but the real sufferers were not. At least, such is your claim; but, unfortunately, even this thin lamina of plated patriotism is abraded, and the pinchbeck basis begins to appear. One of your own witnesses, the Rebel Lieutenant who is charged with having remonstrated with me for my cruelty, suddenly appears on the scene and swears that you were relieved at his request, because your "manner of doing business was so unsystematic and loose" that he was forced to ask for others to be appointed in your place. This same witness also swears that the "men who had left friends, business, and comfortable homes to help save their country from being blotted out of the map of nations,—many of them educated gentlemen,"—*absolutely cursed you!* and that, in your anger, you characterised them as "the rakings and scrapings of Europe." Then it was *your* ox that was gored; but, like a Christian, you forgave them when they cursed me. At his request, then, you were superseded by your juniors in rank, but your seniors in judgment; and, finally, the man you most hated became your successor—reaping laurels which you had sown, and gathering honors where you had planted. From this moment your rage against me cul-

minated, and from that era I was doomed to have greatness thrust upon me.

"The power to give creates us all our foes."

But ignoring the many evils thus warded from your head, you ungratefully exaggerate my shortcomings, and heighten my pernicious doings; whilst I, poor soul, unconscious that a Brigadier-General was chronicling my life, or

"A chiel amang us, takin notes,"

pursued the even tenor of my way, without heeding my biographer, or even "throwing a sop to Cerberus."

The *status* of a military spy, though his function be necessary, has never been deemed honorable. The risks they run, and the dangers they encounter, though worthy of the bravest, fail to impress the thinking public with the slightest sympathy with their fate, or respect for their name. The genius of a Cooper is insufficient to rescue from partial infamy the memory of one of the best of his class; and even the virtues of an André could not ennoble his specious calling. For the social spy, there is not even the poor apology so grudgingly granted his military prototype. In public life, the meanest position is that of a detective; and who among the honorable, young or old, does not despise the "tell-tale" or the "informer"? In the army we have the Inspector, whose duties though prying, are nevertheless open and legitimate, necessary and improving. The self-constitnted Censorship instituted by you in Libby possesses none of these advantages. Simply, covert and tortuous, punishment and revenge were its only objects.

"It is a note
Of upstart greatness to observe and watch
For those poor trifles, which the noble mind
Neglects and scorns."

Your ardent imagination, however, went further; for where the hoped for fault came tardily to light, you played the part

of midwife, and assisted in the delivery. In my case, if fame belies you not, you tried to impregnate me, unconscious, with crime, and then attempted the "Cesarean operation," but lacking obstetrical skill, you only produced an abortion. Your unfortunate victim is now "doing as well as could be expected," whilst you are poisoned by your own virus.

"The *man* recovered from the bite
The *dog* it was that died!"

Your career in the army has been one of the mysteries of the war. Why you went into it, no one could tell; how you got out of it, no one would say. Let me try my hand in guessing at both. Indebted for whatever of reputation you may have possessed, to a wrong-headed and impracticable idea, you were foisted on the army and the people as the properest champion to encounter King Cotton, because, forsooth, you had once a tussel with King Alcohol; but finding *cold iron* more uncongenial than *cold water*, you turned your attention to the Harmonies, making up in the *Piano* what you lacked in the *Forte*. Thrown, necessarily, into association with military men, you soon discovered that deeds, not words, were the current coin among soldiers; and finding you could not emulate their virtues, sought to surpass their vices. Your tongue was sharpened, not your sword. Confusing the democratic creed with the Revised Regulations, you firmly believed all men were born free and equal, but, as Brigadier-General, you were entitled to most of the spoils. Ever a politician, you only regarded man as a voter, and carried into camp the traditions of the hustings. Never having "set a squadron in the field"—without the knowledge or the ability to command—accustomed only to the strategy of the polls—alike incapable of compelling respect, or exciting admiration, you stood confessedly, a pigmy among giants, a lamentable picture of political preferment. Powerless to gain honors, you sought to gain wealth; and in an incredible short period acquired a notoriety for practising

"The good old plan,
To keep all you get, and get all you can,"

equalled by none since the days of the Gaelic chief. Many generations will pass away before the name of Neal Dow is buried in oblivion, for

> "The evil that men do lives after them;
> The good is oft interred with their bones."

I much doubt, however, that *your* coffin will be crowded with the virtues. At length, derelict in your duty, and whilst exhibiting a bad example, you were taken by an enraged and plundered foe and carried to prison. Here you exhibited another phase. Undignified, petty and selfish,—resembling in person and dress an old woman, and in disposition and temper a malicious boy, you threw aside the dignity of the officer in discarding the uniform, and in assuming the character of a commissioned "tell tale," strove to wring from the fears of your comrades, that consideration and respect they could not accord to your position or person. On reaching your own lines, you endeavored by specious tales and gross misrepresentations, to excite commiseration for unexperienced wrongs, and in order to exalt your own patriotism decried that of others.

Fatigued at length with your flatulence, and alarmed at the accumulating evidence of your malfeasance, the Government looked coldly upon you, and an *unofficial* intimation that your resignation would be accepted, secured the coveted document; although two weeks had hardly elapsed since you publicly stated your determination to rejoin your command, and fight it out to the bitter end.

Such, in brief, is *your* record. To elaborate it demands an abler pen. You are now, fortunately for the cause, out of the service. The last of a long list of incapables, whatever of shame or dishonor entails upon our section, owes its origin to such as you. War among a pacific people, in its inchoate state, is always subject to such evils, and such pretenders.

> "In civil broils, the worst of men may rise."

Unfortunately, however, not only humanity, but morality, is

scandalized by such men, who, as a witty writer once said, "pray one day on their knees and six days on their neighbors."

A few days ago the pleasure-seeking portion of our residents were electrified by the announcement that Heller, the prince of tricksters, would in full sight of the audience, cause a human being to become invisible. Placing his subject in a deep recess, directly against a white surface, he suddenly threw the bright rays of a concealed light between it and the audience, from whose view it immediately disappeared. A few moments after, the Gyges, as it is termed, advanced a pace or two, directly into the rays of the light, and became not only visible but transparent, for immediately behind him, and seemingly through him, was seen a fantastic figure reminding one of the traditionary enemy of mankind—the Devil. So with pseudo-philanthropy, as viewed by the admiring world the grosser particles are hidden by the bright beams evolved by Charity and Humanity, but a nearer approach proves them to be very transparent, disclosing other and more ignoble sentiments behind them. In your case is presented the spectacle of one, once honored and respected, struggling to gain meretricious applause by super-erogant censure of your fellows, and when subjected to the same analytical test, proving but base alloy.

It is not uncommon, however, to find men specially virtuous on one point, remarkably vicious on all others; or, as is more elegantly expressed by the poet,

> "Compound for sins they are inclined to,
> By damning those they have no mind to;"

In years gone by the City of Philadelphia rejoiced in a physician whose proficiency was almost equalled by his profanity. Visiting one day in the family of a noted Quaker, a violent storm arose just as he was leaving. Turning to his patient, who was ranked as one of the shrewdest of his denomination, he requested the loan of his great coat.

"On one condition only, Doctor," was the reply.

"Name it."

"Thee must promise me not to use profane language while thee wears it, for it is a garment formed of good habits."

"Very well," responded the Doctor, "I'll promise." On the following day as he returned the coat, the disciple of Penn closely questioned him as to the performance of the stipulation.

"Thou'rt sure thee did not swear, while wearing it, Doctor?"

"Oh no!" retorted the medico, "I hadn't the slightest desire to swear, but the d—est inclination to lie and steal!"

Substitute "drinking" for "swearing" and the coat might prove as good a fit as "the Captains" did of yore.

It was a barefaced, but most approved, plan to cry "stop thief" to me, at the very moment you were enjoying your own ill-gotten spoils. But robbery, like murder, will sometimes out, when least expected. You opened your mouth, in Portland, and performed that extraordinary acrobatic feat of "putting your foot in it," recalling to mind your query, "did ever a man drink without making a beast of himself?" and my answer, "did ever *you* talk without making an ass of yourself?"

When you told "that little story" about the two heavy trunks, you didn't, then, "see the nub of the joke." The laugh comes in now, but I hardly think *you* will enjoy it. And, by the way, that story was unfinished. Let me supply the sequel. As you were saying, you brought away from Libby Prison "two large heavy trunks" for which the rebels refused you transportation, forcing you to call upon your brother officers to assist you, a contingency already forseen weeks previous, according to Adj't Knaggs; and subjecting you to be snubbed by a junior officer, according to Col. Farnsworth. On reaching the Federal flag of truce boat, you met Brig.-Gen. Lee, for whom you were exchanged, although it was generally supposed that Miss Belle Boyd had been made your equivalent. This officer, just fresh from "God's Country" leaving his comrades well-fed and well cared for, with every opportunity for supplying himself with those comforts of which his own section was reputed so bare, contented himself with *a small valise*, the weight of which caused but little inconvenience to the

bearer ; whilst you, direct from a prison replete with horrors, parting with a thousand comrades whose sufferings gripe your sympathetic heart in the recital, "half-naked and half-starved," coming to a land overflowing with milk and honey, where everything you brought was plenty and cheap, carried with you two large heavy trunks, filled with articles for which your fellow-prisoners were suffering, *one half, at least, of which were not your own*! How does the *contrast* strike you ? When about to leave the Federal Steamer, this "man of war" quietly seized his small valise, was on the point of carrying it himself to the other boat, when the gallant and accomplished Mulford, who is brave enough to be courteous even to an enemy, ordered the Sergeant to relieve him of the burden ; then what dids't thou, thou "man of water ?"

"Put that valise down, Sergeant," these were your words as repeated to me ; "*I* forbid you to touch it! When *I* left Richmond, the Confederates would give me no assistance, and you shall give him none !"

"Sergeant!" calmly replied the unmoved Colonel ; "You will do as I bid you ! Gen. Dow, I have nothing whatever to do with your treatment by the Confederates : I simply know what devolves upon me, and I shall do it, regardless of your wishes or the conduct of others. If they forget what is due to an officer, *I do not*."

For the truth of this I do not vouch, not being present ; in fact I was as far distant, at that moment, from the point in question *as you were* when you learned that I had betrayed you to the Rebels ; but, as I have before remarked, in Italian, "if it be not true, it is well-founded."

But, speaking of Italians, let me bring to your notice a single item in the vast aggregate of your charges against me. "Col. di Cesnola, of the 4th N. Y. Cavalry (an officer of the Sardinian army) saw, heard, and knew much of Col. SANDERSON, and for the last two or three months held no communication, whatever with him—so certain was his conviction of his infidelity to the country. He will gladly furnish any information in his possession, as he believes the good of the service requires Col. SANDERSON'S dismissal from it." Col. Cesnola, on

being called upon to furnish this information, briefly replies: I have never made such an assertion, nor have I authorized any officer to make it in my name. To accuse a man of being a traitor or disloyal to his country requires a great deal of evidence to show it; and I am happy to say that I have not seen *any* evidence which would justify me in calling Col. SANDERSON by such a name."

'Twas shrewdly conceived, and came near to be successful. counting on my proud spirit and disinclination to parley with a foe, and laying some stress perhaps on the revengeful character of his nation, you felt safe in putting such words into Cesnola's mouth, knowing the ill-feeling existing between us; but you forgot he was a soldier and a gentleman. Satisfied in my own mind that, however inimical he might feel towards me personally, he was of approved courage; and, as

"None but cowards lie,"

I did not hesitate an instant, but addressed him *the very first letter* I indited after learning the charges against me. This, unfortunately, miscarried. Two months after, I sent him another; but this, under a mistaken impression of the power of the Commission, he declined to answer in writing, preferring to testify in person. Convinced, nevertheless, that you had misrepresented him, I then called on him; and, after fully stating the character of the Court, and the injurious effect of your statement in thus misquoting him, he unhesitatingly gave the desired reply—distinctly fastening upon you

"An odious, damned lie;
Upon my soul, a lie—a wicked lie!"

Before dismissing you, as I trust, forever, I must relate an incident so apposite in its character as to excuse its introduction.

Sauntering through the town some days ago, my attention was attracted to a water tank, exposed at the door of a dealer in such commodities. Amused by the gambols of the denizens of this watery world, I stopped to scan them. The

keeper of the shop—an ancient and a hoary man, redolent of tar, and a "most fish-like smell," scenting in me a probable customer, emerged from his lair to chaunt his wares. Prime in order he praised the Carp—that popinjay of fishes, with its rich golden scarlet, and varied bands of pearly pink, forming the semblance of a button, bringing vividly to my mind your "get up" in prison; when, arrayed in all your glory, you exhibited yourself to the wondering gaze of verdant "Johnnies," who, fresh from the backwoods, were undecided whether to regard you as a Turkish Bey or a scare-crow. As this thought came into my head, I smiled; whereat my piscatory Mentor, finding me inclined to be merry, narrated many wonderful traits of the finny tribe. Of one that, though quick, comely, and interesting, he was nevertheless a disagreeable inmate of an aquarium—being exceedingly quarrelsome, and having a bad habit of attacking the eyes of its comrades, in order to blind them to its own peculiarities: this was the Sucker. Of another, that throve as well in hot as in cold water. Of a third, that he pilfered the Whelk-shell of his covering; whilst a fourth, in turn, deprived him of his prey.

Oh, fish, fish! how art thou fleshified!"

But what particularly claimed my attention was a species of watery mushroom, which belonged, as I was informed, to the family of "*Anemones*" and rejoiced in the name of *Actinia Carneola*, which, being indigenous to the State of Maine, you may possibly know. Its peculiarities also may properly commend it to your notice. With its "tentackles," as my informant termed them, which are outspreading and grasping, it seizes everything that comes in its way, and is noted as being the biggest thief in the tank.

"By the way Captin," said this hoary Fishmonger, "it always reminds me of a little story, and as it only takes a minute, I'll tell it to you. In days gone by when abolitioners were not so plenty as at present, a few earnest seekers after truth having by great good luck, secured an old sea dog fresh from the coast of Africa, plied him with questions as to the manners, habits and customs of the native, in his free and un-

converted state, until they had exhausted as they supposed every subject under the sun. As they were about to leave him, however, one of them bethought himself of their religious state, and earnestly asked of the well-pumped sailor; 'Captain, do the negroes in Dahomey keep Sunday?'"

"Keep Sunday!" replied the astonished son of Neptune—"Yes, *and every other darned thing they can lay their hands on!*"

I greatly marveled, as I wended my way, if *you* had ever visited Dahomey.

And now, farewell. For the good you have unintentionally done me, I thank you; that you have failed is no fault of yours. You did your best, and if you lacked success it was simply because

> "Slander meets no regard from noble minds,
> Only the base believe, what the base only utter."

With these, at least, you are not without credit, and from them you cannot fail to obtain your meed of praise for the malice with which you have pursued me; for the persistence you have manifested in seeking my dishonor; for the industry you have exhibited in gathering my "sayings and doings;" for the pertinacity you have displayed in planting your calumnies; and especially for the total disregard for truth, honor and justice which has marked your whole conduct in this affair. To such sympathizers I cheerfully commend you, assuring you that from myself you shall ever have my heartiest contempt, and my sincerest prayers for your speedy return to the paths of virtue and honesty.

Yours, &c., &c.,

JAMES M. SANDERSON.

# APPENDIX.

Annexed will be found such evidence as has not already been quoted by the Commission, but which is added to substantiate certain points in my defence, prime among them my charges against Streight for ungentlemanly and cowardly conduct, and against Dow for knavery and sneaking. As these persons were not on trial before the Commission, the members thereof, very properly, did not deem themselves called upon to pass on the testimony affecting their character further than a mere notice of my principal accuser. But as I now arraign him before the great bar of Public Opinion, I add the proofs on which I base my charges.

A LETTER FROM BRIG. GEN. A. E. SHIRAS.

*Office Comm'y Gen'l of Subsistence,*
WASHINGTON CITY, March 4, 1865.

JAMES M. SANDERSON,
*Late Lt. Col. & C. S. V.—*

SIR: In reply to yours of the 7th inst. I would respectfully state that I first knew you in the early part of the Rebellion, and that you were then engaged, in connection with the Sanitary Commission, in teaching and instructing the Volunteer troops in cooking their rations.

Your status as an Issuing and Disbursing officer, whilst in this Department, was excellent.

Whilst Chief C. S. of the First Corps, I never heard of any fault found with you in the execution of your duties.

Your accounts with this office are closed, and I am not aware of any indebtedness to this Department for property or funds.

My knowledge is not positive, but I am under the impression that whilst serving with the Sanitary Commission, you did it gratuitously.

I am, very respectfully,
Your obed't serv't,
A. E. SHIRAS,
*Bt. Brig. Gen'l A. C. G. S.*

## FROM Brig. Gen. WM. POWELL.

[*Commanding 2d Cavalry Div., Dept. of West. Virginia.*]

Sir: During the month of October, 1863, I recollect distinctly of your visiting the hospital, and of your remaining but a day or so. While there, in conversation with me, you called my attention to the fact of a secret organization among the officers in Libby Prison, looking towards an attempt to escape. I cautioned you at the time, as to whom you mentioned the matter. I afterwards learned that you spoke of it to the Ward Master, who was a citizen prisoner from Iowa—his name I cannot now call to mind; he, however, spoke of the matter to another citizen prisoner, a Mr. Vermillion from Iowa, who, I have no doubt, did communicate the matter, in reference to the existence of a secret organization, to the Rebel authorities. In this matter, after a personal examination, I became well satisfied that you were innocent of any criminal intentions.

As to your conduct towards your fellow officers in the prison, I do not recollect of your having any trouble with any one, except Col. Streight, 51st Ind'a Vols., which upon personal investigation, I found had been provoked by Col. Streight, by an ungentlemanly and unofficer-like tirade of abuse upon you, based entirely upon a misconstruction of your language imbodied in a petition to the C. S. of the prison in reference to the ration issued to the officers in the prison. I was aware of the fact that Col. Streight had succeeded in prejudicing the minds of many of the officers against you, and I must confess that I had become so myself; but then, as *now*, feeling it my duty to do justice to all men, I suggested the propriety of allowing you an opportunity of an explanation upon the different charges alleged against you. Accordingly I was chosen as the proper person to demand of you an explanation, as to what seemed to the officers to be your conduct on several occasions, and upon different subjects.

The explanations made by you to me, and afterwards presented by me to the officers in my Department, gave very general satisfaction, and did much to remove the prejudice against you.

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## FROM Brig. Gen. J. S. WADSWORTH.

### A DEFENCE OF LT. COL. SANDERSON.

*To the Editor of the New-York Tribune—*

Sir: My attention has just been called to a letter from your Annapolis correspondent, stating that, from the returned prisoners of War "fresh evidence was obtained of Lt. Col. Sanderson's perfidy."

It is evident, from all the accounts we get, that a bitter feud existed in Libby Prison. If your correspondent had stated this, and that some of the officers intended to prefer charges against Lt. Col. Sanderson, no one would have objected to it; but, when he states that "*evidence*" was procured, he speaks of what he could not have had, and what no one can have, short of an authorized investigation; and, when you spread this statement before your fifty or one hundred thousand readers, you make, unconsciously, I am sure, a poor return to a gal-

lant officer for long and meritorious service in the field and long suffering in prison, from having volunteered in dangerous service not in the line of his duty.

As it is understood that this whole matter is to be investigated by military authority, it is only proper for me now to say that, from a long acquaintance with Col. SANDERSON, and having served for nearly two years in the same Corps with him, I know of no officer who would, in my judgment, be less likely than he to commit the offence imputed to him; and my astonishment will be equal to my regret if a thorough investigation does not entirely exonerate him from any dishonorable conduct.

Your obed't servant,

JAMES S. WADSWORTH.

APRIL 5, 1864.

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## FROM DR. ELISHA HARRIS.

[*Member of the Board U. S. Sanitary Commission.*]

FEBRUARY 6, 1865.

COLONEL: In replying to your inquiries regarding certain points connected with your public services since the war began, I beg leave to state very briefly—

1st. That my personal acquaintance with your purposes to serve the National cause began early in the month of June, 1861; when you asked me and other persons what means could be employed to instruct volunteer soldiers in the art of preparing food in camp.

2d. About the 21st June, 1861, I was requested by Medical and other friends, who were considering the prospective wants of the soldiers, to write to Gov. E. D. Morgan at Albany, and request that he would provide for the temporary support of a certain number of cooks, who should under your direction, serve in camp with regiments of volunteers. The request was granted and a sum of money promised for their payment. I recollect that it became my duty to advise and aid you in commencing such work, and that I saw you faithfully engaged in the details of the duty of preparing rations in the 33d N. Y. Vols., or some other regiment at Washington and its vicinity, during the months of June and July, 1861. I think you met with much discouragement until you finally achieved triumphant results in the 15th N. Y., a regiment of engineers.

At that time, and ever since, I had no doubt that you were prompted by the highest patriotism and humanity to undertake that work. Indeed, in the city of New-York, it was well-known that you were, from the attack on Fort Sumpter, a bold and manly defender of our National cause, and ready to serve in the war in any way you could be most useful. I believe you never received any money for the service performed for the benefit of the army during the period of my personal knowledge of your labors, previous to your connection with the Commissary Department.

3d. I know that you prepared and submitted to me a valuable manual of instructions to soldiers in the preparation of their rations, and that it was subsequently published by the Commissary Department.

4th. I saw you engaged in your official duties in the 22d Mass. Vols., and admired the administration of your Department.

5th. I cannot here forbear to state to you a touching incident in the last days of the patriotic General Wadsworth, that illustrates both the nobility of his nature and the unprejudiced and discerning character of his mind. On the 5th of last March he met me, and stated that he wished to send a small invoice of supplies to his Boys, (soldiers of his old Division—the 1st of the First Corps,) who were prisoners in Richmond and elsewhere in the Confederate States. We walked together in the room of the clerk of the Sanitary Commission, and he then left a check for $3,000, to be immediately expended in certain food supplies then specified; and, after giving his simple directions as to how the packages should be marked, etc., he said "I prefer that Lt. Col. J. M. Sanderson be the person to take the friendly oversight of these supplies when they reach Richmond." I then asked him if the evil reports that Streight and others had set afloat were to be regarded as having any justifiable foundation. The General replied, with peculiar emphasis, "*No, not the least:* I know Sanderson well —he bears trouble and want with a peculiarly philosophical equanimity; and his own cheerfulness and his attempts to make the burden of his fellow-prisoners lighter have been the causes of all the evil reports we have received concerning him." This last generous deed of General Wadsworth, and the truthful interpretation he put upon your temporary misfortune of being evil spoken of by certain fellow prisoners flashed upon my mind with peculiar interest, at the moment I met his corpse as it was borne forward from Fredericksburg to Washington. Had he survived, your defence against slander would have been fully sustained by him.

Finally, Colonel, I beg leave to say to you that I believe that no man that knows you as well as I do, can ever doubt your patriotism and your support of the present Administration.

Truly, yours,

E. HARRIS, M. D.

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FROM Col. H. F. CLARKE.

*Office of Ass't Commissary Gen'l of Subsistence,*
New-York, February 8, 1865.

J. M. Sanderson,
*Late Lt. Col. & Chief C. S. First Army Corps—*

Sir: It gives me great pleasure to be able to state that, while you were Chief Commissary of the First Army Corps and serving with the Army of the Potomac, from September, 1862, to the time of your capture by the enemy in, I think, July, 1863, you discharged your duties faithfully, to the satisfaction of myself (then Chief Commissary, Army of the Potomac) and, I believe, to the satisfaction of your Corps Commander, and all others concerned.

My recollection is, that Capt. Charles McClure, who succeeded you as Chief C. S. First Army Corps reported that he found every thing connected with the Subsistence Department of that Corps in excellent condition.

Very respectfully, &c.,

H. F. CLARKE,
*Col. A.D.C. & A. G. S.*

## FROM Col. L. P. DI CESNOLA.

[*4th N. Y. Cavalry.*]

In regard to the plan of escape: it was originated since long time. The details of the plan were intrusted to me; but, for want of unanimity of purpose it failed. Other plans, subsequently, made it rather a blessing (in my opinion) that it was not carried out, as it would have been wholesale murder.

Being simply a case of justice to you, and the pure truth, I very willingly make this statement.

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## FROM Col. HEBER LE FAVOUR.

[*22d Michigan Infantry.*]

Being the officer highest in rank among the large number of officers brought from the Chickamauga field, I was assigned to the command of the room in which they were all placed; and, by virtue of my position, I was necessarily and immediately brought into contact with Lt. Col. James M. Sanderson, who, at the time, was acting by common consent as director of the kitchen arrangements. I acted in my position until early in December, 1863; and, to that time, was daily and hourly brought into contact with him; and I can freely say, that the intercourse between us was such as should be between officers and gentlemen; and that the general tenor of his conduct was perfectly gentlemanly, just, and courteous; and, to the last time I saw him, (in March, 1864,) he so continued.

During the month of November, I think it was that many of the officers discussed different plans of escape; and one was almost decided upon—which was either, to disarm the guard, by a general and sudden rush, or to relieve them by stratagem by night, which being done, the enlisted men in buildings in the immediate vicinity and on Belle Island were to be released, and the whole party to make their way to our lines. A part of the plan was to obtain the co-operation of our Government. Whether the plan was disclosed by some of the officers, or the Rebel authorities obtained a knowledge of it by means of their spies or otherwise, I cannot say; but the details of such a plan was published in the Richmond papers, and an extra number of infantry and artillery were, for but a day or two, to be seen in the vicinity of the Prison. Soon, things went on as usual: the guards became less vigilant, and, during the month of December, the plan could have been carried into effect as easily as at any previous time. It is my opinion that it miscarried more from the want of concert among the officers than from any other cause. I know that many of the highest in rank opposed the scheme as wild and impracticable, in consequence of the difficulty in securing the co operation of the Government at the proper time, the uncertainty of providing arms and ammunition for the men, the impossibility of handling them as a unit for the one purpose, and the knowledge that there was a large number of troops stationed near Richmond.

There was, I am sorry to state, in the large number of officers in confinement, a great many who, by their actions, should not be classed as an "officer and a

gentleman." Many of this class were at enmity with Col. SANDERSON, for the reason that he would not submit to their blackguardism ; a "hue and cry" was consequently raised against him, and, on the 13th of January, 1864, a procession was formed and marched to the music of tin horns, etc. After proceeding through the Prison, they halted in one of the rooms, and speeches were made against Col. SANDERSON, during his absence from the Prison, and whilst he was distributing clothing to the enlisted men on Belle Isle. The meeting dissolved without any definite action ; indeed, it was generally acknowledged to have been a "fizzle," and no further steps were taken in the matter. Placards were carried in the procession, which were of a burlesque character such as "Bread or Blood," etc. The whole arrangement was nothing more nor less than a farce.

I was not a prisoner at the time of the reinforcement of Gen. Bragg by Longstreet, but I was told several times thereafter that he offered a reward of five hundred dollars to any one that would escape and inform our Government of the fact. I am knowing to the fact that he furnished officers, that made their escape through the tunnel on the night of February 9, with money ; and, in conversation with him previous to the completion of it, he stated to me that any one that would make the attempt to escape should have of such as he had as would be of use to them.

On the 7th March, 1864, I was exchanged with forty-seven other officers, and amongst them was Col. SANDERSON, and we were often together going to and on board the boat, at Annapolis and at Washington. He brought nothing away with him in the shape of boxes, trunks, or large packages, having only a satchel or haversack, and I should have considered it very strange and very unphilanthropic had he or any one else brought away a large quantity of clothing, books, etc., that would have been conducive to the health of his fellow prisoners.

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## FROM COL. THOMAS E. ROSE.

{*Commanding 77th Penn'a Volunteers.*]

Was captured by the enemy at the battle of Chickamauga on the night of the 18th Sept., 1863, and was taken to Libby Prison, Va.

While en route, I escaped at Weldon, N. C., but was recaptured. I arrived at Richmond some time in October.

I was confined in Libby Prison until the 8th of February, 1864, when I escaped from the prison, and was recaptured on the 13th near Williamsburg, Va. I was then taken back to Libby Prison, and remained there until the 1st of May, 1864, when I was exchanged.

In Libby Prison I knew Lt. Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON. He was gentlemanly and polite in his manners, and possessed the style of a well-bred man.

I never knew him to be brutal or undignified, neither vulgar nor profane, nor guilty of any of the prevailing vices exhibited in the prison.

I never heard that Col. Streight had concocted a plan for overpowering the guard, and of capturing or burning the city.

I do not think that Col. Streight had stability of mind to concoct any such

plan, nor do I believe he had the courage to execute any plan that would have for its object the overpowering of the guard.

I was present when he bribed the guard to let him out at the dining room window. I constructed with a rope I kept in my possession, the means by which Capt. Read and he reached the pavement. After I had fixed the rope they hesitated to go. I was angry, for I feared the guard would seize my rope, which was of great use to me in my tunneling operations. Capt. Read went out first, and was talking to the guard on the pavement for a considerable time before Col. Streight could summon courage to go. I charged him with cowardice. He then scrambled out, and he and Capt. Read were quickly conducted to the cell.

I do not call that an attempt to escape; he made no attempt to escape.

Col. Streight at this time knew nothing of the tunnel, although I had been working at it for more than a month. He had nothing to do with originating, planning, or executing the tunnel by which the officers escaped on the 8th of Feb., 1864. If he had, he could have been out of the prison long before I came there, as he had a thousand chances when I had one.

I was the originator of that scheme, and the leader of it throughout. I was the first man to pass through the tunnel, and was recaptured about sixty miles from Richmond.

There were fourteen men besides myself engaged in perfecting it.

Major McDanald borrowed money from Lt. Col. SANDERSON, by which he and Col. Streight effected their escape from Richmond.

These officers would not have entrusted Lt. Col. SANDERSON with the secret if they suspected him of treachery.

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## FROM COL. CHARLES W. TILDEN.

[*Commanding 16th Maine.*]

I hereby state, *on honor*, that my name is Charles W. Tilden, my rank Colonel commanding 16th Regt. Maine Vols. I was captured at the battle of Gettysburg, on the 1st of July, 1863, carried to Richmond, and confined in Libby Prison. I was in command of the Department known as the "Eastern."

Lt Col. J. M. SANDERSON, Chief Commissary of the 1st Corps, who arrived at Libby Prison on the 20th July, was assigned by the Rebel authorities to my dep't. Until the 1st January, 1864, he was in my mess; the other members being Major Russell and Capt. Atwood. Col. SANDERSON had frequent difficulties with Capt. Atwood, and finally left the mess on his account.

Shortly after his arrival, he was requested by a large number of the officers to assume command of the kitchen dep't, and teach the officers how to prepare their rations. This position he retained until Oct. 27, when he resigned, in consequence, I think, of a difficulty with one Lieut. Hall, brought about by a complaint made against Hall by Capt. Atwood. Owing to Col. SANDERSON's efforts, this dep't was conducted with so much system and regularity, that a number of officers in the Western Dep't, under the charge of Col. Streight, made a strong

effort to obtain his services in regulating matters in their kitchen, but owing to determined opposition on the part of Col. Streight and others of his dep't, no invitation was extended. Shortly after, I was informed, that in a political discussion, Col. Streight grossly insulted Col. SANDERSON, after which no further intercourse took place between them.

During the month of December, it was intimated that the officers were to be removed from Libby Prison to Salisbury, N. C., and Col. S. suggested to me that the prisoners should organize themselves into a regiment, selecting their captains from the higher rank, each of whom should recruit his own company, and drill them occasionally so as to habituate them to their captains and commanders, in case an opportunity appeared for an organized escape. Subsequently the whole matter was referred to Col. di Cesnola, with power to elaborate the details, each officer making such suggestions as he might deem proper. None but field officers were initiated into the secret. Col. Streight was not interested at all at the first, but was subsequently informed of the plan. Whilst this was going on, certain charges were made by Col. Streight against the Rebel Commissary, which were presented to me for my approval, in which I could not fully concur, and which, after investigation, Col. SANDERSON and myself found ourselves compelled to contradict to a certain extent: out of this grew a very bitter feud, resulting in a meeting of the friends of Col. Streight, for the purpose of passing resolutions, condemnatory of the course taken by us. At this meeting, I was informed, Col. Streight made a speech particularly abusive of Col. SANDERSON. After the meeting Col. SANDERSON endeavored to obtain a copy of the proceedings, but without success. I was not present at the meeting, but was informed that it was presided over and organized by officers principally from Col. Streight's dep't, and that the speakers were from the same department. After this meeting, Col. Streight's anger against Col. SANDERSON knew no bounds, and he did not hesitate to charge Col. SANDERSON with whatever of mysterious or disagreeable might occur.

About the middle of October, Col. SANDERSON was taken sick and carried to the hospital where he remained but two days. Three or four days after his return we discovered that two pieces of artillery had been placed to command the entrance to the prison, and the guard in charge were doubled: this, I think, continued for two days, when the guns were removed and the guard relieved. This affair caused great excitement throughout the prison, particularly with Col. Streight, and many of the officers in his department, and it was generally reported and believed, even by some of Col. SANDERSON's intimate friends, that he, SANDERSON, had divulged the plot to one of our prisoners, who was acting as nurse in the hospitals, (name I do not remember,) and who reported the fact to the prison officials. I was led myself to think this might be the case, until convinced to the contrary. Subsequent to this another meeting was called, at which Col. SANDERSON was publicly accused of betraying the plot to escape by many of Col. Streight's friends. I was not present at this meeting, and am unable to give the details of same. I will, however, state, that the plot above referred to was concocted by Col. Streight, which was not supported by the majority of the officers present. I think there was a slight change in the conduct of Col. Cesnola towards Col. SANDERSON after this occurrence, yet it did not cause any change in the contemplated plan of escape, or induce those

having it in charge to relax their efforts to carry it out. My impression is that Col. SANDERSON was not cognizant of the plan concocted by Col. Streight for breaking out and capturing the city—at any rate, he was not fully familiar with details of said plan until after he was accused of betraying the plot.

About the time of Col. SANDERSON'S illness, Brig. Gen. Neal Dow returned from Mobile, and it was suggested by some one of our mess that he be invited to join it; this did not meet with favor, Col. S. being particularly opposed to it.

Shortly after his return, a large invoice of clothing and supplies were forwarded by Flag-of-Truce to his address. After some delay he was permitted to visit Belle Isle, accompanied by Capt. Conice, 94th N. Y. Vols., and one or two other officers, (whose names I do not remember,) to distribute it, but in two or three days was relieved, and Col. di'Cesnola, Lieut. Col. Boyd, and Lieut. Col. Van Schrader assigned in his place; with this committee Col. SANDERSON had no connection whatever.

After five or six weeks, however, Col. di'Cesnola, having interfered with some internal regulations of the island, having reference to the volunteering of our men as shoemakers for the Confederate army, was relieved, and Col. SANDERSON was substituted and continued to perform the duties appertaining thereto until early in February, when all egress, in consequence of the escape of some officers, was discontinued.

When Col. SANDERSON first joined the Committee, he took as a companion, (having offered the position to me, which I declined,) Lieut. Col. Cavada; then Major Russel, Jr., and then Capt. Atwood, each of whom accompanied him five or six times. He then took Capt. Wentworth once, and thereafter he selected a different officer each day, giving the preference to those having relations or friends on the island, without regard to his personal likes or dislikes. He also carried backward and forward large number of letters and sums of money. I never accompanied him while serving on this Committee. In the latter part of December, Col. SANDERSON had a difficulty with Lieut. Morley, who was connected with Col. di'Cesnola's mess, owing to some alleged encroachment on Morley's part on the store belonging to the united messes. Out of this a coldness sprung up between Col. Cesnola and SANDERSON, who never spoke to each other during the balance of my stay in prison.

I have frequently borrowed money of him, which I have since repaid—he refusing all interest or gain. I have known him to lend it to others, and often seeking out the needy and distressed; and, in one or two instances, absolutely forcing it upon men with whom he had had difficulties in a greater or less degree. He was easily moved to anger; but, upon the least appearance of a desire to apologise, quickly forgave—one or two instances of this character came under my personal observation.

He was not a profane or brutal man, and was not in the habit of using oaths, curses, and bitter invectives. His general conduct to his brother officers was gentlemanly and obliging; and I never knew him to exact courtesies which he was not willing to return.

His position as director of the kitchen necessarily embroiled him in many difficulties not of his own seeking, and he never received any compensating benefit for the trouble and annoyance he endured fulfilling this position.

Col. SANDERSON had not, at any time, charge of the Sanitary stores more than

any other member of the Committee, and did not have any thing to do with the issuing of them. They came more directly under the charge of Col. Van Schrader. The officers generally obtained a share of them—I, myself, being a recipient. I was informed by several officers that Col. SANDERSON offered a reward to any officer who would convey the news of Longstreet reinforcing Bragg to our Government. I do not remember the sum named. I am cognizant that he lent money to officers to enable them to escape through the tunnel (one of my own party) and I received material from him for this purpose.

He was not generally shunned or distrusted by a majority of the officers. He never expressed any desire to me to know or have any association with Gen. Neal Dow. I have no recollection of his being accused, *in my presence*, of betraying the plot to escape; yet I am knowing to his being personally insulted on this account. No confidence was placed in the story by any gentleman acquainted with Col. SANDERSON'S character; and I never heard any substantial evidence at all pointing to Col. SANDERSON.

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FROM LT. COL. B. B. McDANALD.

[101*st Ohio Vols.*]

I know JAMES M. SANDERSON, Lt. Col. and Chief Comm'ssary of First A. C. He was a prisoner in Libby when I was put in. I escaped, leaving him there. I did not, however, become personally acquainted with Col. SANDERSON until near the time of my escape from prison. A very few days before I left Libby, and at a time when all of the preliminary arrangements were about completed (with the exception of a sufficient amount of "greenbacks"—not "graybacks," for we had plenty of them): our party of four, viz., Col. Streight, 51st Ind. Vols.; Capt. Seaver, same Regiment; Lt. Stirling, 20th Ind.; and myself, set to work to raise the required amount. Having heard it spoken by officers in the Prison that Col. SANDERSON had money, and that he had offered to furnish officers with money to enable them to effect their escape, I went to him and asked him to loan me some; he remarked that he hadn't much about him then, but, if it was a matter of importance to me to have it, he would spare me twenty dollars of what he had—with the understanding that, if I remained in prison, I should return it to him in a short time. I promised him that I would do so. He, then, gave me the money.

At this same interview, he also said to me, that if my intentions were to attempt an escape, that he would tell me something that might be a benefit to me. He thereupon took me to a certain window, and pointed out to me a house in which, he said, lived an Union lady that would give me assistance if I could get to her. I did not at that time reveal the fact to him, but at this same time my party had been corresponding with the same lady, and had succeeded through her assistance in securing a plan to stop for some days in the city; should we succeed in making our escape. We made our escape, was secreted for one week in the house in Richmond that this Union lady had secured for us, and we arrived at Washington on the 28th February, 1864.

I am not positive that Col. Streight knew that I borrowed money from Col. SANDERSON, but I do know that all our money was used in common for the benefit of all.

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## FROM LT. COL. JEREMIAH WILLIAMS.

[*25th Regt. Ohio Vol. Inf'y.*]

During my imprisonment I knew Lt. Col. SANDERSON. In his manners he was gentlemanly, much above an average of the officers. His associates in the prison were among the most accomplished gentlemen there. He was not in the habit of using vulgar and abusive language towards his fellow prisoners, as, I regret to say, some others were.

His style of living was more comfortable and genteel than that of most of the others, and this contributed something towards producing ill-feeling against him on the part of the envious.

There was for a time a coolness between Lt. Col SANDERSON and myself, growing out of a controversy in regard to a matter about which we differed in opinion. Afterwards I had much need of a favor, and having confidence in his magnanimity, I requested it of him, and he at once kindly and gracefully granted it. We afterwards became friends, and he several times materially assisted me. I know of other instances of his granting favors to officers, who like myself, had been prejudiced against him by the influence of a little faction, which, for some reason, unknown to me, had arrayed itself against him.

For a considerable time he was culinary director, by appointment of the Chief Officer (selected by ourselves) of our rooms. He performed the duties of this position better, as I believe, than any other officer in the prison could have done it, systematizing and superintending the preparation of food, and instructing the uninformed how best to cook it. His efforts to give equal opportunities to the different messes brought down upon him abuse and rough language from a few, who determined to break through our regulations whenever it suited them. Chief among these was a very low-bred captain named Atwood. I think Atwood was not respected by any officer in the prison.

The privations of such prison life naturally draw out the less amiable traits of men's characters, and often caused them to forget, or disregard the usual amenities between gentlemen. This rendered Col. SANDERSON'S duties exceedingly difficult and unpleasant, and it was to be expected that he would make enemies, notwithstanding his diligence and unrewarded efforts to contribute to the comfort of his fellow prisoners. Thoughtless or malicious persons availed themselves of the absence of any means of enforcing discipline, and used very provoking language toward him. In my judgment, he exercised towards them a very great degree of forbearance.

Col. SANDERSON was exceedingly generous with his money and provisions. He more than once offered, and in several instances gave, money to officers to enable them to escape, and at one time offered a large reward, to any one who

would escape to our lines, and notify our authorities of the re-inforcement of Bragg's army by Longstreet.

When he left the prison, he divided his provisions and clothing among his fellow prisoners, reserving only what was actually necessary to take him to our lines, in this respect exhibiting a gratifying contrast with the conduct of Gen. Neal Dow, who accumulated a large amount of clothing, blankets, etc., and selfishly took them away with him, whilst officers in the prison were suffering for them, and doubtless are to this day. I may as well add here that Gen. Dow was so selfish, domineering, and "oldwomanish," as to be almost universally disliked.

To sum up, Col. SANDERSON made himself more useful, and contributed more to the comfort of the prisoners both at Libby and Belle Isle than any other half-dozen officers there. He conducted himself like a gentleman, which he undoubtedly is. He was no more intimate with the Rebel authorities than was necessary for the proper transaction of the business of the prisoners. He loaned money to a number of his fellow-prisoners, charging them nothing for the use of it

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## FROM LT. COL. F. F. CAVADA.

[*Late Lt. Col. 114th Penn. Vols. & A. A. G., 3d Div., Second Corps.*]

I know Lt. Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON. My first personal acquaintance with him was in the month of September, 1864. He spoke to me on the subject of organizing in the form of a regiment, for the purpose of effecting an escape, in case we were removed from Richmond to Salisbury, N. C., or some point south of Richmond. Col. SANDERSON was, I think, the first person in the Prison whom I heard speak of such an organization. Col. SANDERSON was selected by the officers as director of the kitchen, to teach them how to cook their rations. He devoted a certain number of hours to this duty, on each day. As far as my knowledge extends, he performed this duty with zeal and fidelity. The position was a disagreeable one, and gave rise to constant quarrels and contentions which were calculated to render Col. SANDERSON unpopular with many of his fellow-prisoners.

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## FROM COL. B. F. FISHER.

[*Chief of the Signal Corps, U. S. A.*]

I have known Lt. Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON since about the 1st of August, 1863. Our relations at no time could be termed very intimate, but were of that friendly character existing between officers thus thrown together, without any resources for pastime save their own minds.

From September 18 to October 19, Col. SANDERSON, offended at the action I took at a meeting held by the officers upon the 18th of September, originated a coolness which existed until the latter date; when he frankly acknowledged that he was in error as to my actions, which opened the way again to our former relations; but never since has that frank feeling and manner existed which had place prior.

I was an inmate of the hospital at the time Col. SANDERSON was there. I believe he was mostly confined to his bed, but conversed freely at times with various officers in the hospital at the same time.

He came to the hospital on the 18th of October, and remained four or five days—the exact number I know not, but he returned to his quarters at the Prison before the 25th; I think he left upon the 23d.

I never saw him at any time in consultation with any Rebel officer, beside the Surgeon in charge.

I have no recollection of seeing any Rebel officers during the time of his stay excepting the Surgeon, Steward, and officer of the guard.

The officer of the guard was the only Confederate official attached to the hospital, in addition to the Surgeon and the Inspector, Mr. Hallett.

The hospital attendants were Federal soldiers or citizens of the North captured, among them was a man named Vermillion. He was, *apparently*, a kind-hearted man, courteous and gentlemanly; but, I am sorry to say, we were forced to suspect his loyalty and honor. He had more privileges than other prisoners.

I was in the hospital when Major Houstain escaped in the Surgeon's clothes, and, so far as I know, those cognizant of the circumstances believed that Vermillion gave information to one of the hospital officials that Major Houstain had escaped.

It would have been possible for COL. SANDERSON to have disclosed anything to the Rebel authorities unknown to the other officers, either at the time he entered the hospital or at the time he left it; but I do not think he could have done so during his stay in the room, and I have no recollection of him leaving the room from the time he entered the hospital until he left it.

I never, for a moment, believed him capable of such treachery.

I knew of a difficulty that occurred between Col. Streight and Col. SANDERSON upon the evening of the 8th of August, when public sentiment in the Prison was perhaps universal against Col. Streight, on account of the language he used towards Lt. Col. SANDERSON in an argument between them.

I cannot say that Col. Streight was considered a most persistent and bitter enemy of Col. SANDERSON after that difficulty. I do not think either had a high appreciation of the other, but that the feeling of dislike was mutual.

I do not think he opposed an invitation being extended to Col. S. to take charge of and systematize the cooking department of the West rooms on account of any personal feeling between him and Col. S.; but because he thought, as many others of us did, that the improvement proposed would be a greater disadvantage than advantage.

He did not take active measures in getting up a meeting against Col. SANDERSON and Col. Tilden. We advised with him, but the meeting was called inde-

pendent of him ; nor was he present until it was organized, so far as my knowledge goes. He made a speech which was very severe and also personal in its character, but it contained some wholesome truths rather roughly expressed. To the extnet in which it was personal it can be said it was abusive aud ill-timed.

He and his adherents did not vote down resolutions of a moderate character offered by the majority of the Committee, and substitute those of a most abusive and unmilitary character. Thereport of the Committee was adopted unanimously, but resolutions more personal in their character were afterwards offered by one of the meeting, and likewise adopted. These latter, inasmuch as they were personal and tended to usurp the place of a decree of a military Court, were perhaps unmilitary.

I do not think Col. Streight had any fear that his conduct would be censured by a military Court, though he might have thought it was not consistent with the Army Regulations. There was a rumor that Lt. Col. SANDERSON intended to prefer charges against Col. Streight.

Lieut. Randolph who joined me at Williamsburg after our escape, informed me that he had obtained money to enable him to escape through the tunnel, from Col. SANDERSON ; and I heard of other instances, but do not now recollect from whom. I have a faint recollection that Major Henry told me shortly before escaping that he had obtained money from SANDERSON, but for what purpose I know not.

Col. SANDERSON always had a good supply of provisions on hand, sent by his friends from the North, and perhaps some of a richer quality than other tables possessed. The main feature of his living was his food was prepared with more care, and his table displayed more cleanliness and taste than those of others. I suppose it was regarded by the class referred to—the worst class—with a wish to help devour what was upon the table. I know it to have caused remark, but the remarks were those of envy, not of *just* censure.

I never heard the loyalty of his associates questioned, and deem them entirely so. They were gentlemen.

I knew of a plan to rescue ourselves which was canvassed by the officers, of whom Col. Streight was one, which was simply an attempt to overpower the guard, capture the arsenal, free the other prisoners, and then fight our way down the Peninsula. I suppose, as clear heads as there were in the prison thought at the time, that if a proper organization and entire unity of action could be secured, it would justify the attempt. No doubt there were some prudent men who found fault with it—those who did not fancy the gauntlet that would have to be run if the attempt was made. It was never attempted to be carried into execution, because there were too many "generals" among us.

I know of Col. SANDERSON's efforts during the month of September to get up an organization for the purpose of escaping in case of removal from Richmond to Salisbury. I think I learned it from Col. S. himself, but I do not know who originated it.

## FROM Lt. Col. A. F. RODGERS.

[*80th Illinois Vols.*]

I was captured near Rome, Ga., on the 3d of May, 1863, and was exchanged at Charleston, S. C., on the 3d of August, 1864—being one of the fifty officers placed there under fire. I had command of the 80th Regiment, Illinois Vols. on the raid into Georgia, commanded by Col. Streight.

I formed acquaintance with Col. James M. Sanderson, in Libby Prison, Richmond, Va. His reputation as an officer and a gentleman was as good as any in the Prison: he was not in the habit of using profane or abusive language. Towards his comrades he acted the perfect gentleman: his associates were of the better class of officers. I was personally cognizant of his services as director in the East room. The officers of the West rooms had it in contemplation to invite him to exercise supervision of the cooking and messing arrangements in their room, which was so strongly opposed by Col. Streight that it was abandoned. I was present at the difficulty between Cols. Streight and Sanderson. Col. Streight abused Col. Sanderson most shamefully. Every officer that heard it censured Col. Streight for his ungentlemanly and abusive language.

After this difficulty, Col. Streight was a persistent enemy of Col. Sanderson and was instrumental in getting up a meeting in the East rooms, for the purpose of denouncing Cols. Tilden and Sanderson. It was generally understood that Col. Sanderson would bring charges against him for his conduct and remarks on that occasion.

I have known him to give money to needy brother officers, and assist them very materially otherwise, by helping them to medicine, clothing, etc.

I never knew him to refuse a favor to any one, if in his power to grant it.

I am acquainted with Neal Dow, late Brig. Gen. of Volunteers. He was not in my opinion more kind and patriotic than Col. Sanderson. I do not regard him as a better officer or kinder-hearted man. I was knowing to the fact that General Dow had a number of blankets, and when brother officers came in without any, he would not offer them one, and they would have to lay on the bare floor, or sit up all night.

When Gen. Dow was exchanged he carried blankets and provisions away with him.

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## FROM Lt. Col. JOHN HENRY.

[*5th Ohio Cav'y.*]

Was taken prisoner in a fight with Gen. Chalmers at Hernando, Miss., and was sent to Libby Prison, Richmond, arriving there July 6, 1863. I remained until the night of February 9, 1864, when in company with one hundred and eight other prisoners, I made my escape through the tunnel, was re-captured two days after, and brought back, where I remained until the 30th April, when I was released and exchanged.

Lt. Col. Sanderson's reputation as an officer was, that he was very thorough and rigid in exacting discipline, somewhat of a martinet; exact and orderly

himself, he required those under his control to do their duty; he was very systematic and precise in what he undertook, and, I think, aimed at the good of his fellow prisoners. His character as a gentleman was high, and by his deportment as such, commanded respect. His associates were among the most moral and high-toned in Libby; anything vulgar shocked and horrified him.

His arrangements for conducting the cooking department, although rigid, were well calculated to benefit all concerned; but were not appreciated by those who were too filthy and indisposed to do ought for themselves. There existed in consequence a prejudice that grew, and was nourished by those who disliked restraint until it assumed a hatred, and any saying was twisted into such a shape as was best calculated to stir up dislike in the minds of those who were the recipients of his favors, and turn them against him. Consequently, viewed through spectacles, colored by such prejudices, his enemies could not place to his credit much that was loyal, noble, and benevolent in his conduct and actions. To myself he communicated freely plans of escape, and he often talked of the feasibility of such plans. *He was indeed the first to hint towards organization for the purpose of releasing ourselves.*

He always seemed willing to submit to the action of our Government, in the matter of our confinement, when many of the so-called and loud-mouthed "Administrationists" were denouncing it.

I accompanied him once to Belle Island, and was convinced, that, although his discipline was rigid, it aimed at the good of those for whom he assiduously labored. I do not believe, for I made enquiry of the men themselves, that he treated them cruelly. He was too kind, and too much in sympathy with them to be guilty of such meanness.

His intimacy with Rebel officers went no further than was calculated, in his judgment, to further the welfare of prisoners; he may have used the "Silken Glove," but it covered an "Iron Hand," when duty required him to stand up for the rights of our poor privates. As far as I could observe, he was polite to the Rebels in charge of the prison, but distant and dignified.

When we made our escape, he generously loaned many of the officers money, and bade them "God-speed." I was somewhat prejudiced against him at first, but looking at the matter fairly, I must say that no one went to him in a manly, open manner, who did not find him willing to explain or make the proper amends; and on very many occasions he exerted himself to obtain favors for those who had vilified him. I do not think he would have injured Col. Streight in any way while a prisoner, and no man rejoiced more at his escape, or wished him good luck with a freer heart.

Col. Streight was a good, loyal man, but Col. Sanderson, although not so popular, *was as loyal.* I, for one, never *for a moment* doubted him, and to-day have no cause to change my opinion.

To me he laid open his heart in his grief for afflictions at home, and in our hours of tender conversation I felt his heart was right, whatever others might think.

I will say, in conclusion, on my honor, that I believe the charges made were without the slightest foundation, and had their origin more in a prejudice growing out of the restraints his discipline imposed upon a restless and uncultivated

set of men, unused to being curbed in their desires, and too rude and ignorant to appreciate the efforts of any one laboring for their good, when those efforts conflicted with their loose and selfish desires.

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## FROM Major WM. RUSSELL, Jun.

[ 1. *A. G. Cavalry M. M. Div.*]

I hereby state, *on honor*, that my name is William Russell, Jun.; my rank, Major; my position, Ass't Adj. Gen. Cavalry, Middle Military Division. I was captured on the 20th of July, 1863, in company with Lt. Col. James M. Sanderson, Chief C. S., of the First Corps (of which I was A. A. A. G.,) and one Orderly. We were surprised by a band of guerillas, (twelve in number,) whilst reconnoitering for a ford to cross the column over a deep and rapid stream in the vicinity of Middleburg, Va. We were carried to Richmond, stopping one night at Culpepper, where Col. Sanderson expressed himself a warm advocate for the abolition of Slavery. We were confined in Libby Prison, in the Eastern department, and continued intimate during our whole imprisonment—belonging to the same mess until January 1st, when Col. Sanderson left it owing to the alleged ungentlemanly conduct of Captain Atwood. Shortly after our arrival, Col. Streight took occasion to fasten a quarrel on Col. Sanderson, and insulted him in a most gratuitous and ungentlemantly manner. In this affair every honorable man sided with Col. Sanderson, and commended his conduct.

During the month of October, Col. S. was taken quite ill and carried to the hospital, where he remained two or three days. On his return he suffered a relapse, and was quite ill for some time. During this latter attack we were suddenly surprised to find two guns placed to cover the entrances to the Prison, and the guard doubled. On inquiry, we were informed that the citizens of Richmond threatened to break open the Prison and set us free, as we were raising the price of provisions. Subsequently, we learned that some one had revealed a plan of escape which we were said to be concerting; and, finally, we were informed by Col. Streight and his friends that Col. Sanderson had betrayed us to the Confederate authorities. As no attempt to escape was made the guns were withdrawn and the extra guard retired, and matters proceeded as usual. This charge against Col. Sanderson was not made openly or in his presence, that I ever heard; but was whispered about without attaining, as far as I know, the slightest credence among his friends, or the better class of officers surrounding him.

A few days later, a large supply of subsistence and clothing, addressed to Gen. Neal Dow (sent by our Government) was received; and Gen. Neal Dow was permitted to visit the Island for the purpose of distributing it. He was accompanied, I think, by one or two junior officers. He went but two or three times, as he was suddenly relieved by the Confederate authorities; and Cols. Cesnola, Boyd, and VonSchrader substituted. These gentlemen were constantly employed in transacting this business for five or six weeks, when Col. Cesnola

brought down the anger of the authorities by some action on his part, and he also was relieved; and Col. SANDERSON, at his (Cesnola's) suggestion, assigned to his place. Col. SANDERSON, at first, selected Col. Cavada as a companion, but this gentleman was obliged after four or five visits to abandon this position, and I was invited to take his place, until I, also, was forced by sickness to relinquish it, after having accompanied Col. S. for some days. * * * *

Col. SANDERSON was quick-tempered, and spoke sometimes more sharply and severely than was necessary; but he was ready to forget and forgive, and was as easily approached by a foe as by a friend, especially when a favor was to be conferred. Several officers, who had had serious difficulties with him, were relieved by him without the slightest hesitation on his part. I have known him to lend money to officers, and he was known for his stock of medicines and little necessaries which he sent for to the North expressly for the needy and improvident. My successor, as Col. SANDERSON's companion, was Capt. Atwood, who was selected at the request of Col. Tilden; although Col. S. did not particularly affect him. This officer held the position for five or six days, when Col. S. decided to take a different officer every day, so as to afford many who had relations among the soldiers an opportunity of visiting them. In his selection he appeared to be guided by the claims of the applicants, giving the preference to those having the greatest claims. I have since heard that many of these men went over expressly to obtain evidence of his cruelty, great reports of which were circulated throughout the Prison. * * * * * *

The day following the "McKee" meeting, Col. S. asked and obtained permission to select two officers daily for his companions; and, during the continuance of his visits to the Island, he was always accompanied by that number.

Early in February, five officers made their escape from the Prison, whereupon all privileges extended to the Committee and others were cut off, and all visits to Belle Island ceased. Col. SANDERSON was sometimes, however, permitted to visit the officer in charge of the boxes; and I knew he did everything in his power to procure the boxes of any one who would ask his assistance. Just before the general exodus through the tunnel, several parties asked and obtained money from Col. S. to enable them to effect their escape; whilst to others he gave everything he could spare, calculated to aid them in getting through safely. Finally, when about to be exchanged, Col. S. divided among his companions and messmates everything he was possessed of in the shape of books, clothing, bedding, and subsistence—amounting to over two hundred dollars, if not more, carrying away with him the contents of a haversack and one blanket. After his departure, Captain Atwood, who had been promised his release by Dick Turner, was unexpectedly sent back; and immediately charged it upon Col. SANDERSON, who, as I have since been informed, was not aware of his not being on board the steamer until so apprised by Capt. Fobes, some hours after their departure.

Col. SANDERSON was not given to profanity, bestiality, or abusive language. On the contrary, he was courteous and obliging to every one who approached him in a gentlemanly manner.

I have seen him in a passion and have heard him apply epithets of a most abusive character to an officer; but only when, as I thought, richly deserved.

## FROM Surgeon A. W. WHITNEY.

[13*th Mass. Vols.*]

* * * * * * * * * * *

I have known Lt. Col. Sanderson for nearly three years ; we were imprisoned in the same room nearly four months. He was courteous, gentlemanly, and soldierly in his deportment, and not in the habit of using profane, vulgar, or abusive language. His manners, habits, sentiments compared favorably with any of the officers imprisoned with us. * * * * * *

I was present at a difficulty that occurred between Col. Streight and. Col. Sanderson,—in my opinion, and I believe in that of all the officers there present, Col. Streight was wholly to blame. I think it was generally reported and believed that Lt. Col. Sanderson intended bringing charges against Col. Streight for violating the Army Regulations, and for a cowardly surrender of his command to the enemy.

I remember the guard about the prison being doubled, on account it was said, of a discovery by the Rebel authorities of a plot among the prisoners to break out and escape. I have heard *both* Col. Sanderson and Col. Streight accused of having divulged this plot to the enemy ; the former by talking about the plans to his brother officers, before one of the nurses in the hospital ; the latter, by sending a threatening message to Major Turner, the commandant of the prison, saying, "tell Turner he'll be damned glad to see me, and that before long." But I do not believe that either of these gentlemen would intentionally stoop so low as to betray the plans of their fellow prisoners. I believe Col. Sanderson to be a high-minded, honorable, and patriotic gentleman, and that he would scorn such meanness. I was posted up in the plan of escape proposed by Col. Cesnola and others,—to insure its success the active co-operation of the U. S. Government was requisite. When I left the prison, Col. Cesnola and Lt. Col. S. were on friendly terms.

I was released with the other surgeons on the 24th day of Nov., 1864. Col. Sanderson worked early and late striving to systematize the Culinary Department, and teach his brother officers to cook their rations—his services were valuable—the position one of delicacy and difficulty, calculated to make more enemies than friends among the lawless, self-willed, and insubordinate.

I heard Col. Sanderson offer a large reward to any officer who would escape, and convey information to the U. S. Government concerning the movements of Gen. Longstreet's command.

Col. Sanderson borrowed over three hundred dollars, ($300,) in greenbacks, of me, to lend to his fellow captives. * * * * * *

Col. Streight was in the habit of "giving the lie" to his brother officers whenever he thought he could do so with impunity.

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## STATEMENT of Maj. FARNSWORTH.

* * * * * * * * * * *

I knew Lt. Col. James Sanderson whilst a prisoner in Libby—was on terms of general acquaintance. I call his manners courteous and gentlemanly. * * *

He did render valuable service to his fellow prisoners by his efforts in organizing the kitchen, and in teaching them how to prepare their rations. My own

impression was at the time that if Col. SANDERSON had exclusive control, and had been obeyed, the condition of our rations would have been much better. But there were numbers among us who wanted to do as they pleased, and owe allegiance to no one; this brought Col. SANDERSON in collision with some officers. * * * * * * * *

I saw Col. SANDERSON when he left the prison, paroled. I think he took only a cloak with him.

I left the prison with Gen. Neal Dow when he was paroled. He had two trunks, which he requested officers to assist him in carrying to the truce boat.

He asked me to assist him, but I told him that I had left all my blankets and clothing, sent me from home, for the use of the remaining suffering prisoners, and that I must decline the honor of carrying any of his. * * * *

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## STATEMENT OF MAJ. J. H. HOOPER.

[*15th Mass. Vols.*]

* * * Was, on the 25th day of July, 1863, captured by the Rebel guerilla Mosby, near Warrenton, Va., and was held in captivity, as prisoner of war, by the Rebel authorities, at the Libby Prison, Richmond, Va., from on or about the 1st day of August, 1863, until the 9th day of February, 1864, when I made my escape from said prison with other officers of the U. S. A., by means of a tunnel, secretly dug from one of the cellars of said prison.

During my imprisonment I became acquainted with Lt. Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON of the Commissary Department of the U. S. A., and considered him in his habit and deportment, gentlemanly, courteous, soldier-like, and in his speech free from profane, vulgar or abusive language. * * * * *

In habits, manners, and opinion he compared, in my estimation, very favorably with the majority of the officers confined in Libby Prison.

Social intercourse and companionship with him, to a great extent, was sought by the better class of officers.

At one time it was freely asserted by many that Lt. Col. SANDERSON had betrayed to the Rebels a plan of escape, which had been for some time maturing, but it is my impression that Lt. Col. SANDERSON cleared himself entirely from said charge, even in the minds of those who openly avowed themselves his enemies. Never for a moment did I believe Lt. Col. SANDERSON guilty of such a crime, nor did I stand alone in such belief.

Lt. Col. SANDERSON was at one time director of the kitchen, of the part of Libby Prison known as the East rooms. He was appointed to this position, I believe, by his fellow-officers. In the capacity of director his teachings were of much value to his inexperienced companions; and, in my opinion, the order, system, manner of cooking, etc., which to a great extent he inaugurated, were highly conducive to the preservation of health among the inmates of the Prison.

The position was one well-calculated to make enemies among men whose selfish or greedy propensities were paramount to all others.

I knew Col. Streight by sight only; never having, to my remembrance, ex-

changed a word with him. His manners were not such as to create in me a disposition to cultivate his acquaintance. * * * * *

I was present at a meeting gotten up by some officer or officers for the purpose of denouncing Col. SANDERSON. The proceedings of this meeting and the resolutions offered were of such a scandalous nature that even his enemies were disgusted, and all just-minded men present united in expressions of disapprobation. It is my impression that no one attempted to substantiate these charges, although, to my certain knowledge, Lt. Col. SANDERSON repeatedly challenged his accuser to do so. I have been told that Lt. Col. S. repeatedly loaned money to officers needy and in distress; and I know positively of his having loaned money to officers about attempting to escape through the tunnel; and not only loaning money, but freely giving provisions from his own stock; and in one instance, in which I was personally interested, brandy, ext. of ginger, and other valuable articles were given—the possession of which very much increased the chances of success in the rather hazardous business of baffling vigilant Rebels for twelve days. * * * * * * *

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FROM DR. ALEXANDER McDONALD.

AM Agent of the U. S. Sanitary Commission: was taken prisoner July 5, 1863, near Mechanicsvile, Md., and conveyed to Richmond, Va.; there confined in Libby Prison and Castle Thunder, till September 22, 1863. * * While in Libby Prison I knew and was in daily communication with Lt. Col. J. M. SANDERSON. * * During a part of the time of our confinement in Libby Prison, Col. SANDERSON acted as chief of the culinary department for the Middle and Eastern rooms; and, in that capacity, rendered valuable service, by improving the mode of preparation of such rations as were furnished, thereby undoubtedly diminishing the risks of sickness from the use of improperly prepared food. His position in this department was a difficult and arduous one, well calculated to cause enmity and ill-feeling on the part of thoughtless persons; but, as far as I know, Col. SANDERSON performed his duty in a just and impartial manner—giving general satisfaction, though exciting the ill-will of a few.

While in the prison I believed Col. SANDERSON to be a humane man, and am cognizant of several of his acts which tended to show his kind disposition to aid the suffering, and have never since had knowledge of any acts on his part which should cause me to change such opinion.

Col. A. D. Streight was confined in the same prison, and I became somewhat acquainted with him, but did not consider him a gentlemanly person, and therefore avoided his society.

A person named Vermillion was employed in the Prison-office, during a part of the time I was in the hospital of Libby Prison, and I believe he afterwards became a nurse in the hospital. He had once been a Union soldier, but seemed to hold some subordinate position as clerk or copyist in the office of the prison, and at Belle Isle. Saw him several times in the hospital, and had some conversation with him, on two or three occasions. Did not deem him an honest or

sincere man, and feared he was in league with the Rebel authorities, by whom I believe he was permitted to visit the hospital for the purpose of obtaining information regarding the plans of prisoners there confined.

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FROM Capt. E. A. FOBES.

[*Chf. C. S. 2d Div. Cav'y Corps.*]

* * * Was captured at Brandy Station, Va., June 9th, 1863, and taken to Libby Prison, Richmond, Virginia.

I know Lt. Col. Sanderson very intimately. We occupied the same quarters and messed together the last months of our imprisonment. I saw him every day previous to messing with him. His conduct was gentlemanly, honorable, and that of an officer; he was kind and liberal to suffering officers, and especially to the sick. His language was habitually pure and temperate. His company, as a rule, was sought for by officers of inferior and equal rank. * * * *

I was present when the misunderstanding occurred between Col. Streight and Col. Sanderson, and consider Col. Streight greatly in the wrong. I deemed Col. Streight's conduct far from that of an officer and a gentleman, especially as we were under the observation of the enemies of our country. * * * * *

I know that Lt. Col. Sanderson did offer a sum of money to any officer who would attempt to escape, and convey certain information to the Federal authorities. I also know that Lt. Col. Sanderson did furnish money, and our mess subsistence, to such officers as applied previous to their escape through the tunnel. * * * * * *

Lt. Col. Sanderson left prison the same day I did, only taking a small haversack and fifty dollars in money; the latter he expended for meals for officers on board flag-of-truce boat New-York, on her trip from City Point, Va., to Annapolis, Md.

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FROM Capt. E. A. MASS.

[*88th Tenn. Vols.*]

* * * Was captured on the 1st day of July, 1863, at Gettysburg, Pa., carried to Richmond, Va., and confined in Libby Prison.

I know Col. James M. Sanderson, Chief C. S., 1st Army Corps.

I was not intimate with him the early part of his imprisonment. I was very unfavorably disposed towards him at first, because I had heard so much said against him in regard to his being too intimate with the prison officials. It was the custom to ascribe everything of a disagreeable nature to Col. Sanderson, and one great cause of dislike to him was caused by his being appointed Culinary Director, having charge of the kitchen, and having to decide a great number of quarrels daily, and no matter how justly decided, I noticed that the party decided against, almost invariably became Col. Sanderson's enemy.

As far as I could see he always acted justly and gentlemanly while holding the position, which was a most difficult one to fill, and of great benefit to all of us.

I heard it stated that Col. SANDERSON betrayed a plan to escape to the rebels. No evidence was ever produced to my knowledge to substantiate this charge, and it is my candid opinion that this and other charges were made against him in prison, because he was the most unpopular man there.

I never knew him to be harsh, repulsive, or ungentlemanly in his intercourse with the officers in the prison.

I cannot recollect of ever having heard him use profane, vulgar, or abusive language.

His associates in prison I would judge to be among the most loyal there. I visited Belle Island in company with him on one occasion, to help distribute clothing. I saw nothing cruel, harsh, or insulting in his manner to our soldiers there. He did not punish any one while I was there, although one of our sergeants reported a lot of men to him for having done something wrong; what it was I cannot now recollect.

I went to Belle Isle at my own request, because some of the men of my regiment were there and wrote to me to come and see them. I heard previously to this that Col. SANDERSON had been in the habit of using the men on the island very roughly.

I asked them if it was true that Col. SANDERSON had been in the habit of treating the men badly, and they told me that they had not seen anything of it. * *

I was present at the meeting gotten up by the enemies of Col. SANDERSON, during his absence. Charges of the worst kind were made against him in a series of resolutions, but proofs were demanded, and not *one man* could be found who would say that there was the least bit of truth in them, and they were indignantly voted down, and the effect was to open the eyes of the majority of the officers, who thought as I did, that there was a party in the prison very unjustly persecuting Col. SANDERSON, and I must say up to this time I actually despised the sight of him, not that I saw anything myself, but altogether through reports I had heard against him. * * * * *

I did not see Col. SANDERSON carry away with him any large package or bundle. Nothing would justify an officer in taking away from the prison *anything* that would conduce to the comfort of his fellow-prisons. * * *

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FROM CAPT R. O. IVES.

[*10th Mass. Vols.*]

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Col. SANDERSON'S experience as regards subsistence, cookery, etc., was of the highest benefit to the whole Prison; and I attribute to his watchfulness and care the fact that so few of our number died of the miserable provisions furnished by the Rebels.

I also understand that it was upon charges prepared by Col. A. D. Streight and a certain Brig. Gen. Neal Dow, backed by some statement of an enlisted man.

that Mr. SANDERSON has been dismissed. I have not the honor of the enlisted man's acquaintance, but Col. Streight and Gen. Dow I know intimately. The former is a notorious atheist, from Indiana—a man who, in my humble opinion, would stick at nothing to injure a personal enemy; who hated Col. SANDERSON; and, in the presence of numerous officers, applied to him the most abusive epithets. A man rash, headstrong, ignorant—brave, no doubt, but a thorough vulgarian, who instinctively hated a gentleman.

Of Brig. Gen. Neal Dow I need only say, that he had a difficulty with Col. SANDERSON arising out of the fact that, from his imprudence in language, he was removed from distributing the U. S. stores sent to prisoners, and Col. Cesnola, 4th N. Y. Cav. put in his place. He also was subsequently removed, for the reason that his relations were supposed by Brig. Gen. Winder, C. S. A. to be too intimate with one John Higgins, clerk in the office of said Winder. Mr. SANDERSON was then appointed, and by his tact and ability executed his difficult task to the general satisfaction of the Rebel authorities and the U. S. officers prisoners of War. However contemptible such jealousy may be on the part of Brig. Gen. Neal Dow, I give it as my belief that his animosity to Lt. Col. SANDERSON, and the charges subsequently brought by said Dow, had their inception in this matter of distributing clothing.

As to the brutality of Lt. Col. SANDERSON to the men on Belle Island I can say, from my own knowledge, that he treated them as an officer and a superior—quelling riot, and enforcing regularity in the quantity, time, and manner of distribution, as his memoranda or accounts will show. I have also talked with numerous prisoners who were on Belle Isle, in my various prisons, and have yet failed to find a good soldier who found any fault with Lt. Col. SANDERSON. The deserters and substitutes (bounty jumpers) were, of course, loud in their denunciations—for, to them, Lt. Col. SANDERSON was decidedly rude, not to say "brutal."

I do not know that I need to say more, except as to the allegation that Lt. Col. SANDERSON betrayed a plot of certain officers to escape. As an intimate of those deepest in said plot, I can utterly deny the statement; for there never was a plan made, although said plot was mooted by several surgeons and Col. Streight, assisted by two or three determined chaplains—I am not sure but what some foreign officers (Italian, or what not) figured in said plot; but it was perfectly still-born, never having attained the dignity of a *fœtus;* and Col. SANDERSON never betrayed any plot, plan—or, to my knowledge, any confidence reposed in him.

And, in closing this statement, allow me to add that, in my humble opinion, Lt. Col. SANDERSON is the victim of men whose meanness of sentiment and innate vulgarity (Brig. Gen. Neal Dow included) have made them overlook the many kind acts and noble traits of Col. SANDERSON.

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## STATEMENT OF CAPT. E. CHARLIER.

[*A. A. Inspec. Gen'l Northern District, Dept. of the South.*]

* * Was taken prisoner at the battle of Gettysburg, July 1st, 1863, remained about

eight months in the Libby Prison, Richmond, Va., and released on parole March 7, 1864, with a number of other officers.

I became acquainted with Lt. Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON shortly after the beginning of his capture. My quarters were at first in a room next to the one where his were. Afterwards, and during the four or five last months of my sojourn in the Libby Prison, my quarters were close to his. My knowledge of him became, therefore, constant and intimate.

So far as I could ascertain without taking any particular pains to do so, his reputation was, at first at least, that of a respectable and respected officer, and gentleman. I heard afterwards some complaints against him, but never could find means to ascertain whether they were founded or not. He seemed to have warm friends and bitter enemies.

No charge against him was ever substantiated in my presence, so far as I can remember, and I could never come to the conclusion that he deserved the opprobrium which some endeavored to cast upon him.

The fact that he had so many enemies was attributed by me to petty jealousies caused by his appointment at the head of the Culinary Department of the prison; his efforts to regulate it in the midst of most trying circumstances; and also to his being appointed to superintend the distribution of provisions and clothing to the prisoners at Belle Isle.

Unless I except the use of the word "damn," I never heard Lt. Col. SANDERSON make use of vulgar or profane language. He was always polite and refined in his intercourse with me, or with others in my presence. I even thought him religously inclined.

His manners and habits were too far above those of too many of the prisoners to admit of comparison in my own mind.

Never did I hear him utter a sentiment that had any disloyal tendency towards our Government, or that showed any sympathy for the Rebel cause. His relations with the Rebel officers and employees of the prison were indeed frequent, amd apparently pleasant and courteous; but they were necessitated to a great extent by his functions as head of the culinary department, and his having to go out daily to Belle Isle. Like myself and others, he thought also that nothing was to be gained by ungentlemanly conduct towards our keepers, and that unless a successful plan of escape could be devised, and carried into execution, we ought to submit to the regulations of the prison. When once I observed to him that his intercourse with the Rebel officers was perhaps overfriendly, he answered that it was merely that of gentlemen who came in daily contact, and that it might be beneficial to the welfare of the prisoners, or something to that effect. I understood also that he had in view an appointment as General Agent for the transfer and distribution of supplies to prisoners of war in Rebel hands, and that he considered such an agent as more likely to succeed well in his mission, should he be on good terms personally with the Rebels.

I never perceived that Lt. Col. SANDERSON was avoided by the best class of officers, and never heard a charge of disloyalty brought against him, except once when the only proof adduced was his intercourse with the Rebels. To the best of my knowledge he was treated with respect and deference by most of those whom I considered as the respectability of the prison. A few, his enemies, for reasons unknown to me, did not speak to him, or of him in my presence.

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## FROM Capt. S. G. HAMLIN.

[134*th N. Y. Vols.*]

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I knew Lt. Col. James M. Sanderson in prison. His services as culinary director, and his labor in organizing and systematizing the mess arrangements of the prison, conduced more to the welfare and convenience of the officers than the acts of any other officer. I deemed his labors of great value to the prisoners. His position was a difficult and unpleasant one, exposing him to annoyance and insult sometimes from junior officers. It was a prevalent opinion in prison that all distinction of rank ceased while there, which caused much trouble, especially to whoever undertook to introduce any regulations. Col. Sanderson exposed himself to much abuse in his judicious attempts to introduce system and regularity, although his services secured us much convenience and protection.

I never saw anything in Col. Sanderson's conduct to justify a charge of cruelty, inhumanity or brutality. I know of instances, on the contrary, of his willingness to loan money to fellow officers to better their condition. It was reported in prison that he had advanced money to prisoners to enable them to escape.

I did hear it charged or rumored in prison that he had betrayed a plan of escape to the Rebels. No proof was ever given to me of the truth of the charge, nor do I believe it was generally believed. I never heard of any person making the charge to Col. Sanderson personally. My belief is, its foundation is personal enmity and not substantial proof.

I was acquainted with Gen. Neal Dow. I saw him take from the prison two trunks with him when he left for the North. I saw him pack the trunks. He did put some blankets in them. The trunks were filled, but whether they contained any condensed milk or medicines, I could not positively say. It was the prevalent opinion, however, that they did. I knew Capt. Atwood in prison, and will say in justice to you, without injustice to others, that I never saw anything in your character as a gentleman and an officer, but what would very favorably compare with that of Capt. Atwood, Gen. Dow, or Col. Streight.

The number of blankets Gen. Dow saw fit to take up to Maine with him I don't exactly know. I heard it was fourteen. I know he took several.

If my statement will be any use in extricating you from the bitter clutches of personal strife engendered in our loathsome confinement, and which I believe to be a matter of personal enmity, I will have no regrets at the result.

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## FROM Capt. MARTIN TOWER.

[13*th Regt. Mass. Vols.*]

* * Was taken prisoner July 1, 1863, at the battle of Gettysburg, was confined in Libby Prison, Richmond, Va.. from July 18th, 1863, until February 9th, 1864, at which time I effected my escape by means of a tunnel dug by officers confined in the prison.

I was intimately acquainted with Lt. Col. SANDERSON, and consider his character as a man and an officer unimpeachable. * * * *

He was excelled by few of the officers confined in Libby, in his manners, habits and opinions. * * * * * *

I was acquainted with Col. A. D. Streight, and consider his conduct towards rebel officers, and others visiting the prison, as ungentlemanly and unbecoming an officer of the United States. In no respect do I consider him more loyal, just, or officer-like in his behavior than Col. SANDERSON.

I never heard in Libby of Col. SANDERSON betraying any plan for escape to the rebels, but know that he was aware of the existence of the "tunnel" at least one week before my escape, from the fact of personal consultation with him on the subject. After I arrived home I heard of Col. SANDERSON'S arrest, and talked with many officers (ex-prisoners) in regard to it, and they all considered it unjust and cowardly in his accusers, and not one of them spoke of him in any other way than as an injured man, arrested without the slightest cause.

I accompanied Col. SANDERSON to Belle Island, and during my stay there he treated the men with all kindness possible. * * * * *

I remember many instances of his furnishing money to his comrades, and also of his troubling himself on their account, particularly in carrying packages and messages to the men at Belle Island.

I knew Brig. Gen. Neal Dow, and did not consider him more patriotic or more honorable in his conduct than Col. SANDERSON, and certainly not so gentlemanly; had frequently heard while confined in prison that Gen'l Dow kept what we called there "a black list," consisting of the names of officers who, for trivial offenses, he, when we should be released, was to have court-martialed and dismissed the service.

I never, while in prison, heard of his lending money to his comrades.

I was acquainted with Capt. Atwood, and he had the reputation of being very quarrelsome and disagreeable, and was constantly engaged in difficulties while cooking in the kitchen, and continually calling Col. SANDERSON to settle trivial and unnecessary quarrels.

Col. SANDERSON, on his entrance into the prison, undertook the systematizing of our cooking and commissary affairs, which were in a very unsatisfactory condition, and I believe that everything he did in regard to them was done in an impartial manner, and every gentleman thanked him for it. The position was extremely disagreeable and well calculated to make enemies for one who did his duty impartially, particularly of persons of selfish dispositions. * * *

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## FROM CAPT. GEO. H. STARR.

[*104th N. Y. Vols.*]

* * Was taken prisoner on the 1st July, 1863, at the battle of Gettysburg, and escaped from prison at Columbia, S. C., on the 10th October, 1864, reaching our lines at Knoxville, Tenn., on the 13th November, having travelled about

400 miles. At the Libby Prison I first became acquainted with Lt.-Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON, and occupied quarters in the same room with him during the whole of his imprisonment. * * * * * * *

Soon after he appeared among us, he was made Director of the Kitchen Department, and for many months used earnest and assiduous efforts to organize and systematize the cooking and messing arrangements of the prison, which efforts were very praiseworthy, and certainly resulted very beneficially. The position was not a desirable one, and occasioned grumbling and fault-finding among the lawless and selfish, but was properly appreciated by the majority.

The Colonel did many generous and friendly acts to his brother officers by loaning money and other articles, which acts are held by many in grateful remembrance.

There were rumors about the prison, especially after the Colonel had gone, that he had been instrumental in betraying some plan of escape to the rebels; but many of his friends who heard of it, interested themselves in tracing this rumor to its source, and never could learn what was the plan of escape so frustrated, nor even the least grounds to justify such a story. * * *

Being engaged in distributing clothing, &c., to our soldiers, and thus being obliged to leave the prison daily to go to Belle Island, it gave occasion to his enemies to talk about collusion with the rebels, and to circulate stories which were never credited by sensible men, for the Colonel was only acting in the line of his duty, and never to my knowledge, left the prison without a guard.

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## FROM CAPT. J. MARCHE McCOMAS.

[*Co. I, 9th Maryland Vols.*]

Was captured on the 18th day of October, at Charlestown, Va., and arrived at Libby Prison, Richmond, on the 26th same month, and was released therefrom on the 16th of March. I arrived at Annapolis the 18th of the same month. I thought at the time of my release, and still think, that through the intercession of Lt.-Colonel SANDERSON I was paroled. I was intimately acquainted with Col. SANDERSON, occupying the same room with him—the east room—for nearly five months. I have conversed with him often, and never heard him say anything in regard to the rebellion, but that he sustained the Government at Washington.

The Colonel was very gentlemanly in his manners, and courteous to those that showed respect to his position as an United States officer. So far as I am able to judge he would compare favorably with his brother officers. * * * *

I accompanied the Colonel to Belle Island on one occasion. It was through him I was permitted to visit the Island of Death, and see for the last time my suffering boys. He was very gentlemanly towards me, and all he came in contact with on that occasion. I never heard him make use of profane language; on the contrary, I always thought his manners very acceptable to gentlemen, not to others. I have known him to interest himself to obtain boxes for his fellow-prisoners and succeed; and advance them money to relieve their wants.

## FROM Capt. H. E. RULON.

[*Capt. Co. B.* 114 *Regt. Penn. Vols.*]

Was captured by the enemy at Gettysburg Pa., on the evening of July 2d, 1863, arrived at Libby Prison, Richmond Va., July 18th, from which place I was released March 14th. 1861.

I know Lt. Col. James M. Sanderson, having been confined with him upwards of six months in the above prison. * * * * * * * * * * * I was cognizant of his efforts to organize and systematize the cooking arrangements of the prison. His efforts in this particular were very beneficial and praiseworthy, the position was a very difficult and trying one, and Col. Sanderson filled it with justice and impartiality. I *have* heard a charge made against Lt. Col. Sanderson, of having betrayed a plan of escape to the Rebel Authorities. It obtained very little credence among the officers; it was never substantiated, and I never heard any one willing to prove it. or make the charge to Col. Sanderson personally. * * * * *

I have known Col. Sanderson to loan money to officers in distress. I know Capt. Atwood, he was known latterly as a bitter enemy to Col. Sanderson; he was not regarded as an agreeable person, but quite the reverse. I know A. D. Streight, to the best of my knowledge, he bore a very good character as an officer and a gentleman. He was known to be an enemy of Col. Sanderson. I did consider him more loyal than Col. Sanderson, from the fact that he openly expressed his hatred for the Rebels in *very strong language*, yet I did not consider him more gentlemanly or more kind than Col. Sanderson, the above, in my opinion, equally applies to Ex-Brig. Gen. Neal Dow. I left the prison with Gen. Dow, he brought away with him two large trunks, I did not hear any rumors as to their contents. * * * * * * *

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## FROM Acting Master FENTRESS, U. S. N.

* * * Was captured in Mississippi, Sept. 12, 1863, and arrived at Libby Prison October 1, 1863. I remained in Libby until May 6, 1864, when I was sent South. During my stay in Richmond I was quartered near to Lt.-Col. J. M. Sanderson, and was in daily communication with him. I always found him gentlemanly in his deportment, and a firm supporter of the Government in all its measures. As an *officer* he was, certainly, far superior to the majority confined in Libby.

In October, he took charge of the culinary department, and by his energy and knowledge of those things, (which but few knew anything about,) systematized that department, thereby rendering a most important service to his brother officers. His position was a most difficult one while in charge of that department, and among the unruly he had many enemies. Sometime about the 9th of October, Col. S. and myself were sent to the hospital; we were placed near each other while there, and I never saw him in conversation with any rebel officer or soldier. He left the hospital in a few days, and was again taken to Libby. About three days after he left, I myself was taken to prison,

and for the first time heard that some one had betrayed a plot of escape. No one ever spoke of Lt.-Col SANDERSON as the betrayer. It was generally known that a fellow, by name Vermillion, who was acting as nurse in the hospital, betrayed the plan to the surgeon in charge. I know this Vermillion; he was not an officer; I think he was a sutler when captured, and I always took him to be a bad man.

I knew of the plot to escape, and was to command a party of naval men, in surprising a rebel gunboat near the prison, but I know that nothing was to be undertaken until *our* Government was informed of the plan, and *co-operate with us.*

I knew Colonel Streight; he was considered by all the officers confined in Libby as a great blusterer. He had several quarrels with Col. SANDERSON, and was disposed to make trouble whenever opportunity occurred. I have frequently heard Col. Streight express himself in a most unofficerlike and ungentlemanly manner, when speaking of the "neglect of prisoners" by the Federal Government.

I also knew Neal Dow, Esq., (ex-Brig.-General.) He was regarded in prison as a fanatic, who twice a week gave lectures on temperance, when even *water* was most difficult to obtain.

Strange rumors were afloat in prison concerning quantities of sanitary stores appropriated by the General for his mess. * * * * *

By Colonel SANDERSON'S gentlemanly conduct while in prison, he won the esteem of many officers; and even the brutal keepers of the prison were compelled to acknowledge his superiority, and grant his requests at times. Those requests *were always made* for the comfort of his brother officers.

I consider the loyalty of Lt.-Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON as unimpeachable. 'Tis true he had not the *bluster* of Col. Streight, nor the *whine* of Neal Dow, Esq., but, I think, is *as true* as *either*.

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FROM CAPT. E. McB. TIMONEY,

[*15th U. S. Infantry.*]

* * * * * Was captured on the 20th Sept., 1863, at the battle of Chicamauga; was held a prisoner seven months and ten days, and was paroled by the rebel authorities of Libby prison on the 30th day of April, 1864. * * * * * *

I knew Lt. Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON. * * * *

So far as I am capable of judging he is one of the most gentlemanly men that I have ever seen. During the time that we were confined together I never knew him to act in any manner unbecoming an officer and a gentleman. I don't think I ever heard him use a profane or vulgar expression, and as a gentleman and an officer he was superior to the mass of his fellow prisoners. As an honest loyal man I never met his superior in Libby prison. * * *

I knew of his teachings and services as Director of the Kitchen of the East room. They were very valuable. Through his kindness and experience we were made ten times more comfortable than we would otherwise have been.

The position was a thankless and disagreeable one, and no man unless he possessed a kind and sympathetic heart, would have held the position a week, and have to deal with the discordant elements confined in Libby prison. The position could not fail to create many enemies among the selfish and the quarrelsome.

I first met Col. SANDERSON on the 2d Nov. He asked me if I was one of the Chicamauga prisoners, and if there was anything he could do for me and my brother officers. I told him that the rebels had taken our money from us and that we had nothing. The Colonel then said "I will see if I can't do something for you," and on the next day he gave me one hundred dollars. He appeared to sympathize very much with us, and told me to tell my brother officers that he hoped they would not hesitate to come to him for help, as he would gladly give up all he could spare. In addition to this kindness to myself, quite a number of officers told me of similar acts of kindness. * * * * *

There was a difficulty between Col. SANDERSON and Col. Streight prior to my arrival at Libby prison. I heard a great many officers speak of it, and say that they thought Col. Streight had acted in a very rude and insulting manner to Col. SANDERSON; from all I could learn Col. Streight was the aggressor.

I met Col. Streight nearly every day for seven months. Since his exchange he has been killed in battle, if he was alive I could answer the question (as to his being a gentlemen and a soldier) fully. As it is I can simply say that Col. Streight was not an officer that I would care about numbering with my friends, as I did not esteem him as a courageous or prudent officer.

I heard that Col. SANDERSON intended bringing charges against him for a violation of the 26th Art. of the Army Regulations, and for the cowardly surrender of his command in Georgia, which was severely criticized by every officer of intelligence and experience that I have ever conversed with on the subject. * *

The officer in command at Belle Island treated every Federal visitor there, as far as my knowledge extends, with great kindness and hospitality, and I believe that if the government and sole care of the prisoners on Belle Island had been entrusted to him. there would have been no cause of complaint so far as treatment was concerned. * * * * * *

Col. Streight being dead I cannot answer as to the contrast between him and Col. SANDERSON in their intercourse with Rebel Officers, as I would were he living.

One of the first things I learned on arriving at Libby Prison was that Col. SANDERSON had offered a reward to any officer who would make his escape and carry intelligence to our Government of the reinforcement of Bragg by Longstreet.

I do not remember of Col. SANDERSON having lent money to one or more officers to enable them to effect their escape through the tunnel. But *I do* know that he offered me and other officers money for the purpose of bribing the guard on other occasions, if we thought we could effect our escape, and have held frequent conversations with him on the subject.

I did know Capt. Atwood, he was generally looked upon as what is known in the army by the term "striker" and was always regarded as a very quarrelsome and disagreeable person.

I did not consider Gen. Dow as more loyal to his country than Col. SANDERSON, and of the two, Col. SANDERSON was the most kind and attentive to the wants of his fellow prisoners.

I never knew Col. SANDERSON to refuse any one a favor, if in his power to grant it, and I have known him to treat his enemies among the prisoners, with as much kindness as his friends.

I was present at the McKee meeting, the whole affair was gotten up by the enemies of Col. SANDERSON for the avowed purpose of injuring his character, and was discountenanced by every high toned officers and gentleman in the prison. The meeting was gotten up in Col. SANDERSON'S absence on Belle Island, and on his return he demanded a copy of the charges, but the ten or twelve men who tried to have a set of resolutions passed at the meeting were so ashamed of their own conduct that he was unable to obtain a copy.

The charges against him were not sustained by the slightest attempt at evidence, and when even his enemies demanded proof to sustain the alleged charges, the authors of the affair were not able to give any; and, although Col. SANDERSON'S friends were there accidentally, they out-voted and defeated his enemies by a large majority, and the whole affair was regarded by every high-toned gentleman as a cowardly and disreputable attempt to injure an officer by a trap during his absence. * * * * * * *

To the best of my recollection it was not cold enough to freeze a man's extremities before the 25th December. I don't think we had cold weather before the first week in January.

No officer, to my knowledge, did more to alleviate the discomforts of his fellow-prisoners than Col. SANDERSON. I shall always remember his kindness towards myself and brother officers with gratitude, as I believe, the preservation of our health was, in a great measure, due to him.

I saw him when he left the prison; he did not carry anything away but a shawl. Everything he had, clothing and subsistence, was given by him to his messmates.

I also saw General Neal Dow when he left the prison. I was told by quite a number of officers that the General carried away two large boxes containing clothing, subsistence and blankets. I saw boxes belonging to him carried out of the prison, and for some time afterwards it was a subject of general remark among the officers.

I do not think any officer justified, under any known circumstances, in carrying away blankets, or even books, knowing how many of his comrades were suffering for want of them. In fact, I cannot see how it was possible for him to do so when there were so many officers in want, and without the opportunities that most of us had for obtaining supplies from the North, nearly one hundred of our number being from Tennessee and other places near the enemy's lines, whence they could not obtain supplies.

FROM Capt. J. F. SKELTON.

[*17th Regt. Iowa Vols. Inf'y.*]

Was wounded and captured at Jackson, Miss., on the 14th day of May, 1863, and remained in Libby Prison until I made my escape on the 11th Dec., by bribing a rebel sentinel. * * * * * * *

During my imprisonment with Lt. Col. Sanderson, I always regarded and respected him as an officer and a gentleman of both moral and military worth, this gained for him many friends, and he was generally esteemed by my acquaintances. I regard him as as a true and loyal man. I never heard him express himself unfavorable or do an act against the Government, and whilst other officers were expressing themselves against the Administration, for allowing the prisoners to remain in Rebel hands, he ever seemed patient and had no feeling against the Federal Administration, and often rebuked officers for denouncing it. While in the hospital, although sick himself, to my positive knowledge he was constantly attending to the wants of our sick and wounded prisoners, dividing his provisions, and giving money to purchase such luxuries as were to be had. When he left the hospital, he divided what provisions he had among the most needy. When leaving the hospital, he was asked by one of the prisoners, in my hearing, why he returned to the prison so soon, he said that there were others, sick and suffering more than himself, and that his bed was needed for them. While in the hospital his conduct was such as to gain for him the esteem of every Federal Officer in it; at least, such were the expressions of all so far as I have ever heard. When Col. Sanderson revealed to me a plan to escape, I know that he was not overheard by any of the Rebel Authorities, nor by Federal prisoners.

I never heard a Federal officer in the prison say that he suspected Col. Sanderson of revealing this plot to the Rebel Authorities. So far as my acquaintance extended, it was generally believed that William L. Vermillion was the party who divulged the plot.

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FROM Lieut. P. OWEN JONES.

*1st Lieut. & Adjutant, 2d N. Y. Cav.*

Was captured on the 22d of September, 1863, at Liberty Mills, Va., and was released on parole from Libby prison on the 7th of March, 1864. I was personally and intimately acquainted with Lt. Col. James M. Sanderson. * * * * * * I always estimated and regarded him as one of the most gentlemanly, courteous, and obliging officers confined in the prison. I never knew of his having used profane, vulgar or indecent language; on the contrary, I am decidedly of the opinion that much of the ill-feeling entertained towards him by the selfish and more ignorant portion of the prisoners arose principally, if not altogether, from his universally dignified bearing; so far as my observation went, he was at all times treated with respect, and highly regarded by a decided majority of the intelligent portion of the prisoners.

His manners, habits, and general conduct were those of the most polished

gentleman, and this under the most trying circumstances, *i. e.* during his administration of the kitchen department of the East Room—a delicate and trying position which he filled eminently to the satisfaction of all with whom I ever had any conversation on the subject. In my opinion, his services in systematizing and conducting this affair were of the most beneficial and servicable character, and entitle him to the lasting gratitude of all who were so unfortunate as to be confined in Libby prison at that time. * * * *

I never entertained a very favorable opinion of Col. Streight; his peculiar views on the subject of religion, &c., were such as to preclude the posibility of my regarding him with much favor; but have not the slightest animosity against him watever. He was, I believe, regarded as the chief circulating medium (if not the author) of unfavorable reports against Col. SANDERSON.

* * * I accompanied Col. SANDERSON on one occasion to Belle Island, and had ample opportunity of judging for myself as to his manner of issuing clothing to the men, as well as his general treatment of them, both by personal observation and conversation with the men, and the result was I was completely satisfied that his method of conducting this business was most wise and judicious, and that no better system could have been devised. I know of his having punished men, and I also know that in every case brought to my notice the recipient eminently deserved it, for a more lawless and demoralized set of men I never saw; such a concentrated essence of rowdyism I hope never again to come in contact with. I never heard of his having punished any man for refusing to salute him or neglecting to take the position of a soldier.

I never regarded his intercourse with the rebel authorities, either on the Island or elsewhere, as being more intimate than was perfectly proper and strictly loyal. I have not the slightest hesitancy in saying, in the most unqualified manner, that he was the means of mitigating in no small degree the sufferings, and ministering to the wants of his fellow prisoners, much more so than any other individual on the Distributing Committee. * * * *

I know Capt. Atwood. I do not regard him as a gentleman or man of honor, nor would I believe him in any case where his personal enmity or interests were involved. I know of his having circulated slanderous reports against Col SANDERSON.

I never regarded Gen'l Neal Dow as a very distinguished military man, but rather as an intermeddling, fussy and antiquated old gentleman. * * *

In conclusion, I beg to say, that I esteem it a privilege to be allowed to testify in defence of one whom I believe to have been most cruelly and unjustly wronged; and who is the victim of a most unscrupulous persecution on the part of a few envious and narrow minded individuals who have been actuated more by personal enmity than by a regard for the best interests of our country, or the service. I cannot close this statement without testifying to the numberless acts of kindness performed by Col. SANDERSON towards his fellow prisoners. I have yet to learn of an instance where he refused anything that was in his power to do or to give, either to friend or foe, when applied to. I know of several instances when he furnished money to aid his fellow prisoners to escape.

FROM Lieut. L. B. COMINS,

*1st Lieut. 4th Mass. Art'y.*

Was captured at Bacheler's Creek, near Newbern, N. C., Febuary 1st, 1864, and was carried into Richmond, and was confined in Libby prison until April 30th, 1864. I knew Lt. Col. James M. Sanderson; I became acquainted with him at Lynnfield, Mass., where he was acting as Quartermaster of the 22d Mass. Vols., to which I was then attached as private Secretary of the then Colonel Hon. Henry Wilson. I never saw him act in a cruel, tyrannical, or unjust manner to the men, and never recollect to have heard him use profane or abusive language to any one there, or in Libby prison. His reputation as a gentleman and officer was generally good. I have heard his character decried by men who were known as his enemies. My quarters were among the officers known as "Streight's men."

I know Col. A. D. Streight; he was known as an avowed enemy of Col. Sanderson. He was very abusive and profane in his language, and was generally regarded as a "great bully." I know Brig. Gen. Neal Dow, but did not regard him as more courteous, more humane, or more loyal than Col. Sanderson; he certainly was not as generous, as kind, or as considerate of his companions as Col. Sanderson. He was noted for his selfishness, having a great pile of blankets for his own use while other officers were without any. He is reported to have carried away with him everything which he claimed to be his. I have heard it stated that he carried away blankets, subsistence and medicines. Col. Sanderson carried away with him a shawl and haversack; he left with his comrades a number of articles; to me he gave a blanket. I never saw anything in Col. Sanderson's conduct to justify a charge of cruelty, inhumanity, or barbarity to any one, and never for a moment doubted his loyalty.

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FROM SIMON GAVACAN,

*Lieut. 39th N. Y. Vols.*

Do state on honor, that I knew Lt. Col. James M. Sanderson when he was engaged as Superintendent of the New-York Hotel, and I never heard or knew of his acting unjustly, partially or cruelly to any one under him. He was always strict and severe in his discipline, but never cruel. I have subsequently met him under heavy fire at Fredericksburg, and always deemed h'm a brave and loyal officer.

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FROM Lieut. Wm. McEVOY.

[*3d Ill's. Cav'y.*]

* * * * * * *

I do not know the cause of the enmity between yourself and Gen. Dow, but would judge it to have arisen from your undertaking to deliver the clothing, as up to that time I never learned of any disagreement between you.

There is no one who has been with the General in prison, but knows that he was very pettish, and when these rumors came to his ears, he exerted himself, to a great extent, to find out what he could. And in justice to Gen. Dow, though

he may have wronged you, I believe the old man's fault was more of the head than heart. He was goaded by the Rebels, and would catch hold of anything to show their rascality, and your position was such that it placed you between the two fires. Yourself and others were aware that your mode of living caused you a good many enemies. I believe they called the mess you were in "the Royal Family," and the fact that you had plenty to eat and to wear—in a place where bread and clothing were such objects, was sufficient to excite the envy of little minded men; and, unfortunately for you, these men found the ear of Gen. Dow open to their suggestions and opinions, and it is my opinion that if you had had ragged trowsers and but one shirt, you would likely have come off scot free.

With regard to the General's action in keeping and oversupply of blankets, I never paid any attention to it. Capt. Adam Dixon told me that he had some fourteen or fifteen, and that he asked him (Dow) to let him have a grey one to make a rebel suit to escape with, but that the old General would not let him have it. Dixon also told me at Columbia, S. C., that the General would not give an officer in Libby a blanket, but informed him that he expected Gen. Scammon, whom he expected to share with. I am aware the old General was selfish in some matters, but selfishness developed itself in the most of us in some shape or the other. The only thing that seemed to me that was wrong in Gen. Dow, was that, while he was doing *all in his power* to effect a *special exchange for himself*, he would preach to us the necessity of *us dying* in prison before yielding to the demands of the Rebels.

As to the course which Capt. Atwood has taken, I know nothing more than that he was a great friend of yours once, and done all your cooking, and fell out with you because you would not give him *wine*, so the story went in Libby. If he has taken the advantage of you, it should learn you a lesson, although you are old, that is, to be a little more careful in selecting your cooks in future.

Now my dear Colonel, my own honest conviction is, that you are neither a thief nor a traitor. I saw you in prison from Sept. '63, until you were exchanged, and saw nothing in your manner, nor heard any charge brought against you to make me think otherwise.

I would feel proud to have it to say that all the officers had conducted themselves in such a gentlemanly manner as you did: it would reflect an honor on us as a body of officers. Your courtesy was the means of Turner and others paying you attention, and their doing so made you enemies in the prison.

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FROM LIEUT. D. J. CONNOLLY.

[*7th Reg. V. R. C., U. S. A.*]

* * * * * * *

Was captured at the Battle of Gettysburg, 2d July, 1863, and was a prisoner of War at Libby Prison, Richmond, Va., for a period of eight months, and was released on parole on the 7th day of March 1864. I was acquainted with Lt.-

Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON, * * * * *

I have known Capt. Atwood, and of his having had a difficulty with Lt.-Col. SANDERSON, after which he was never a friend of Col. S.

I know Col. A. D. Streight by sight and by reputation, he had the reputation of being a very violent and excitable officer, and of using profane and ungentlemanly language to his fellow-prisoners in his conversation with them. There were rumors floating round the prison to the effect that Col. Streight surrendered his command in a very unjustifiable and unsoldier-like manner. He was the principle character in getting up an indignation meeting among the officers in the upper East room, for the purpose of denouncing Cols. SANDERSON and Tilden. He was known to be a bitter and unscrupulous enemy of Lt.-Col. S. He was reported to be the originator of a story to the effect that Lt.-Col. S., was the betrayer of the plot to escape to the Rebel authorities. Such charge was, however, never substantiated, nor was there ever an attempt to do so. I have heard, and know and seen Lt.-Col. SANDERSON lend money to his needy comrades. I have heard it remarked among the officers that Lt.-Col. S., had lent money to some of the officers to enable them to escape through the tunnel.

I knew Brig.-Gen. Neal Dow, by sight and by reputation. I have heard of his keeping a "black list" of the names of his fellow-prisoners who had in any way misbehaved, or who had enjoyed themselves by talking loud at night, &c. There was a rumor afloat among the prisoners to the effect that he (Gen. Dow) was captured in a manner which showed negligence and carelessness on his part. I have heard officers, who were released at the same time with Gen. Dow, say, that he took away with him all his food and eatables in two large boxes, when he was going away from prison, which was considered a gross act of inhumanity considering the then needy and distressed condition of the prisoners.

I have never thought Gen. Dow or Col. Streight were more loyal, humane or courteous gentleman than Lt.-Col. SANDERSON.

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## FROM LT. HARLAND RICHARDSON,

[*2d Lieut. 19th Ind. Vols.*]

Was captured at the battle of Gettysburg, in Pennsylvania, July 1, 1863. I was paroled at Columbia, S. C., on December 8, 1864. I was well acquainted with Lt. Col. J. M. SANDERSON. * * On several occasions I knew of the Colonel lending money to his distressed comrades and fellow-prisoners, and doing all in his power to better their condition.

I know that Col. SANDERSON rendered much valuable service in the Kitchen Department of our prison, in systematising and regulating that department; and that he was painstaking, industrious, and forbearing, and that his position was a trying and difficult one, causing much enmity on the part of the lawless and insubordinate. His conduct was just and impartial to all men while engaged in his official duties, in my opinion; and by his promptness, firmness, and discipline, he added much to the comfort and regularity of that important point of prison life—the meals. I know there was a band of selfish and quarrelsome

characters who did everything in their power to impede Col. SANDERSON and others in their efforts to establish system and order in the prison. * * Col. SANDERSON was frequently referred to as an arbiter of the disputes arising in the Kitchen Department of the prison. I knew Col. Streight, but I knew but little about him. He was one of the prisoners with the rest of us; but, so far as I knew, he was not more of a gentleman, more humane, or more loyal than Col. SANDERSON. I know, or at least have strong reasons for believing, that Col. Streight was a personal enemy of Col. SANDERSON. * * *

I knew Neal Dow, Brig.-Gen.—he was not considered more kind or patriotic than Col. SANDERSON. I never heard of him lending money or putting himself to any trouble in any way to better the condition of his fellow-prisoners. I knew of his taking two trunks away from Libby Prison, supposed to contain blankets and provisions; and I think there was not at any time more blankets or provisions in the prison than was necessary for the comfort of the prisoners. In fact, there were prisoners there all the time suffering for the want of these articles. I never knew Col. SANDERSON to convey any thing of the kind away; but, on the other hand, I know that he left blankets and provisions with the officers, when he left the prison.

I knew Capt. Atwood, and I recollect one instance in which he got Col. SANDERSON into a difficulty with other officers, and I know that he was a bitter enemy of Col. SANDERSON.

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## FROM LT. GEO. D. BRISBEE.

[*2d Lt. Co. C, 15th Maine Vols.*]

I was captured at Gettysburg, Pa., July 1, 1863, and have been a prisoner in the hands of the rebels ever since that time till December 9, 1864, when I was paroled by the Confederate authorities at Columbia, S. C.

I knew Lt. Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON; I first met him in Libby Prison; I was quartered in the same room and the same portion of the room with him. I was in the same mess with him a portion of the time.

I knew Capt. Atwood, of the 16th Maine Vols.—he was considered quarrelsome and a *tale-bearer*. He was constantly embroiling Col. SANDERSON in useless and embarrassing difficulties in the kitchen by his tattling and selfish disposition. He was finally known as a bitter and unscrupulous enemy of Col. SANDERSON.

* * * * * * *

I knew of Col. SANDERSON advancing his money to his needy fellow-prisoners *and sharing his fare with those who were more needy.*

I was present when Gen. Neal Dow left the prison—he carried two large trunks with him. I did not see the contents. I heard it said they contained blankets.

XXXIX

FROM Lt. R. C. KNAGGS,

[*1st Lt. & Aid-de-Camp to Brig.-Gen. Henry Baxter.*]

Was captured on the 1st of July, 1863, at the battle of Gettysburg, and remained a prisoner in the hands of the Rebels at Libby Prison, until released on parole, March 7, 1864. I knew Lt. Col. J. M. Sanderson—was as intimate with him as an officer of my rank could expect to be. He was very gentlemanly, courteous, and kind—even to conferring favor on those who disliked him. He was continually being called on, by nearly all, at different times, to alleviate the sufferings of his fellow-prisoners; and I never heard of his refusing any one of his brother officers a favor, if in his power to grant it. For instance, at the time of our release, when on the Flag of Truce boat, *New-York*, great fault being found with the accommodations furnished us, Lt. Col. S., by tacit consent, was selected as the proper person to represent his brother officers, although by no means the ranking officer present, and obtained the necessary redress. He even loaned money to his brother officers, who were destitute to pay for the meals that they were obliged to purchase.

He invariably used all the influence he possessed for the purpose of mitigating the horrors of prison life.

The position of Culinary Director (a very disagreeable one) was voted him by officers of the higher grade. I considered his teachings most valuable, and, if properly carried out, would have conduced much to the comfort of those concerned. His whole time, for some months, was devoted to the organization and carrying out his plans, and was only abandoned in consequence of some of the junior officers becoming insubordinate.

He was not in the habit of using vulgar or profane language to his comrades, and his deportment was that of a true gentleman in every sense of the word. I never heard him say one word adverse to the Government or its measures, or anything that could be construed as favorable to the Confederacy, or its institutions; but, on the contrary, he ever in his language and general deportment, gave evidence of his entire loyalty to the U. S. Government.

He was very popular generally as an officer, and his society and favor was courted by officers of inferior and, in some cases, superior rank. His style of living was such as to provoke comment from the envious and jealous-minded, although he owed none of its advantages to any other than himself, as they were the result of his own knowledge and tact.

I was aware of a difficulty existing between Col. Streight and Lt. Col. S.—and the general opinion was that Col. Streight was the aggressor. I was not present at any of the meetings called in reference to the difficulty. I met Col. Streight very frequently and have spoken with him at different times, but was not intimate with him; but, from my observations of his actions, I believe him to be of a tyrannical and overbearing disposition, very profane in his language, and with but few characteristics that would designate the gentleman. I heard Lt. Col. S. say that his intentions were to bring charges against Col. S., for violating certain Army Regulations, and for a cowardly surrender of his command to the enemy.

I knew Capt. Atwood very well. In my opinion, he was the means of instituting or circulating many slanders against Lt. Col. S. He, in many instances, drew Lt. Col. S. into disputes with his brother-officers in regard to who had a

right to the cooking stoves. Capt. A. was of a quarrelsome disposition, very apt to find fault when there was no cause whatever. He was noted for his selfishness, and had but very few friends either in or out of prison.

I was quite intimate with Brig.-Gen. N. Dow (that was.) I never considered him any very great honor to the uniform he *did* wear (which consisted of a Captain's coat and a Private's pantaloons,) or the Service, as evidently his *Forte* was not that of a military man, but that of a *Temperance lecturer*.

He was not noted for his amiability or his generosity. During my whole term of imprisonment, I never knew him to do one single kind action, or to assist in any way or shape whatever towards alleviating the sufferings of his companions.

He was the possessor of two large packing trunks and a large number of blankets; and, when asked by me one day previous to his exchange, what his intentions were as regarded the trunks and blankets, he very coolly informed me that all he had he should certainly take with him. Said I: "General, you cannot carry them—how will you get them to the boat?" [distance some half-mile.] "Oh," said he, "I will get some of the other officers to assist me." I only state the foregoing to show how extremely selfish the General was, when there were plenty of officers who, up to the the time I left, had not even a blanket they could call their own, and would have blessed him ten thousand times for what he took away and what he did not need after his arrival in "God's country," more than a toad would require *two tails* I also wish to state, that all rumors (of which the prison was full, all the time) that came to his notice, to the disadvantage of Lt. Col. S. or others, (the former, more particularly) he noted in his memoranda book; and would also make inquiries of his brother-officers about the same person, in order to ascertain something to his disadvantage. He was not only meddlesome in the affairs of others, but was so extremely anxious to get something to write down, that he would get into an argument with some one and pick up what little things the man might have said unwittingly and book them preparatory to a settlement after their release. This has been told to me.

I did not consider Gen. Neal Dow in every respect so truly loyal as Lt. Col. Sanderson. I formed this opinion from what I saw and heard while confined with them as a prisoner.

Lt. Col. Sanderson left, when released, nearly everything for the benefit of those who remained in prison—all his blankets, medicines, tools, etc., only bringing with him a haversack and shawl.

The distribution of the Sanitary Commission Supplies was placed under the supervision of Capt. E. A. Fobes, C. S., without Lt. Col. S. being cognizant of the fact; and I believe that the stores were distributed equally, with the exception (as I have been told, by Capt. Fobes himself) that Col di Cesnola and Brig.-Gen. Neal Dow received rather more than anyone else—the latter *pleading destitution*.

I think the cold weather did not come until the latter part of the month of December.

## FROM Lieut. THOMPSON LENNIG,

[*2d Lieut. 6th Penn. Cav'y.*]

Captured June 9th, 1863, at Brandy Station; confined in Libby prison from June 10th, 1853, to March 14th, 1864.

Lt. Col. James M. Sanderson arrived at Libby prison about five or six weeks after myself, and I was only slightly acquainted with him until he joined the mess composed of Capt. E. A. Fobes, Capt. R. O. Ives, and myself.

I always heard Col. Sanderson spoken of by the better class of officers as one who maintained his position as an officer and a gentleman. He never, in my hearing, made use of profane, vulgar or abusive language, and was not distrusted by the officers of my acquaintance on account of supposed disloyalty. I believe that Col. Sanderson stood as high in the estimation of a majority of the prisoners as any officer of equal rank.

I never heard Col. Sanderson express any sentiments adverse to our Government, or in favor of the rebellion. We messed together nearly three months, and I remember distinctly having heard him condemn slavery in strong terms. Our mess was certainly better provided than others, but this was owing to our friends at home, who sent us boxes by every opportunity, and not to the favoritism of the rebels. To my certain knowledge, Col. Sanderson distributed food to his fellow prisoners, and lent money to those who tried to escape. I was confined in the same room, with Col. Streight for five months he did not generally command that respect among his fellow-prisoners to which he was entitled by his rank.

I heard officers of his command say that his surrender of his command was unnecessary and premature. I was not present at the discussion between Col Streight and Col. Sanderson, but I heard many officers say that Col. Sanderson had behaved with dignity and reserve, and that Col. Streight had grossly insulted him.

I did not know Brig.-Gen. Neal Dow personally, but owing to the crowded condition of the prison I saw him daily. Gen. Dow had no influence in the prison, and was often the subject of ridicule for those who forgot his rank in the general misery that pervaded the prison. Gen. Dow left the prison the same day with myself, taking with him two heavy trunks; it was said, and undoubtedly believed, that he took sixteen blankets with him, sent to the prison by the Sanitary or Christian Commission for distribution; at this time many officers were suffering from the intense cold. * * * * *

Capt. Atwood was apt to make trouble, and carry reports from one officer to another, and in this way was apt to engender a bad spirit.

Col. Sanderson on his departure left nearly everything he had for the use of his messmates and other friends, taking only that which was absolutely necessary. * * * * * * * * * *

I never knew of Col. Streight's having concocted a plan of escape, and believe that any plan for overpowering the guard would have been fool-hardy and resulted in great loss of life.

I once accompanied Col. Sanderson to Belle Isle, and did not see him ill-treat or abuse the prisoners, I did not see him punish them for not taking the position of a soldier. The prisoners were in a most miserable, starving condi-

tion, and many sold their clothes to the rebels in order to procure food, and afterwards tried to obtain more from Col. SANDERSON, to the detriment of those who had not yet received any. On this account Col. SANDERSON was obliged to enforce the strictest discipline.

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## FROM REV. W. G. SCANLAN.

I, Wm. G. Scanlan, a Christian Minister, settled for the last seven years over the Unitarian parish in Grafton, Mass., was captured while acting as an agent for the U. S. Sanitary Commission, and confined in Libby Prison from July 20, '63 to Sept. 2d, 1863, when I was removed to Castle Thunder until Sept. 22, having access to Libby twice during the last named time. During my confinement in Libby Lt.-Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON was brought in. I knew him well and frequently came in contract with him in our common efforts to improve the condition of the officer. He being connected, if not the chief mover in, our kitchen organization; while I sought his interest in our Lyceum and discussions. I never, in my frequent intercourse heard one word in favor of the Confederacy or against his General. I did consider his efforts in the kitchen valuable, and the position a very unthankful one, demanding patience and stability; receiving from many in return suspicions of partiality and a jealousy peculiar to prison life, when crumbs are watched and privilges measured with a nicety unknown in the midst of our common blessings. Barbarity I should take to be the last and least element in his composition. He was always courteous and gentlemanly, my first impression led me to look upon him as being somewhat aristocratic and dignified; he was respectful to all, and choice in his use of language. I never heard of his betraying any plan of the officers to escape, until after his release, and then only through the papers. I never doubted his loyalty, nor had reasons to suspect his conduct. I was also acquainted with Col. Streight, never sought him as a companion, because our general characters might be termed opposite. He was not choice in his use of language. He certainly was overbearing at times, and very bitter against those who differed with him. I should not consider him any more loyal than Col. SANDERSON, not as courteous or humane. He was a delared opponent of Col. SANDERSON long ere I left for Castle Thunder.

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## FROM LOUIS H. BOUDRYE.

[*Chaplain of the 5th N. Y. Cav'y.*]

Was captured by the Rebels near Monterey Pass, Pa., July 5th, 1863, and confined in Libby Prison, Richmond, from 18th July to 7th Oct. 1863.

I knew Lt.-Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON, my quarters were in the same room with his, and within ten feet of his, while I stayed in the prison. I saw him every day, and conversed with him frequently. His reputation as an officer and a gentleman was very good. He was not in the habit of using profane, vulgar or abusive language, and compared very favorably in manners, habits, and conduct with the great majority of the officers confined in Libby. I never

heard him express sentiments adverse to the Government and its measures or in favor of the Confederacy and its institutions.

I knew Col. A. D. Streight. His reputation as a gentleman was very good, as an officer not so very good, there were grave charges current in the prison of his having surrendered his command to the enemy in a cowardly and unjustifiable manner.

He was not, I think, considered more just, humane or loyal than Col. SANDERSON.

I knew of a meeting gotten up by Col. Streight and his associates for the purpose of denouncing Cols. Tilden and SANDERSON, having been present at it, only for a short time however.

I heard Col. SANDERSON say, he intended bringing charges against him for his conduct in this affair.

Col. Streight, before I left, was considered as a bitter and uncompromising enemy of Col. SANDERSON.

I never saw anything in Col. SANDERSON's conduct to induce me to believe him a cruel, harsh or unjust man.

I was cognizant of his efforts to organize and systematize the culinary arrangements of the East rooms, his labors were constant and efficient, serving to add greatly to the comfort and well being of all the prisoners in that department. The position he held was one of great delicacy and difficulty, and well calculated to make enemies of the lawless, the depraved and the selfish.

I think it was in contemplation to invite Col. SANDERSON to take charge of the same department in the West rooms, but it was opposed and defeated by Col. Streight for his own selfishness.

I knew Capt. Atwood, who was regarded as a most quarrelsome and captious person, constantly complaining and embroiling Col. SANDERSON in numberless difficulties.

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## STATEMENT OF ENLISTED MEN

*of the 16th Maine Vols.*

We hereby state on honor that we are members of the 16th Maine Inf. Vols., and that we were captured at the battle of Gettysburg, July 1st, 1863, and carried to Belle Isle, where we were confined as prisoners of war.

We were present at the time the clothing was received from our Government and distributed by Col. SANDERSON, and received certain articles of said clothing. We do not know of his habitually ill-treating, abusing or insulting the enlisted men while issuing the clothing, or constantly addressing them with oaths, curses or bitter revilings.

Did not see him or know him to "buck or gag" or kick them for trivial offences, or punish them severely for not saluting, or for refusing to take their hands out of their pockets.

He did not exact of them more respect than military discipline required or his rank entitled him to. As far as our observation extended, he acted with

justice and impartiality in distributing the clothing, and did not observe more caution than was absolutely necessary to prevent being cheated by improper and dishonest men.

There were a certain class among the prisoners known as "Raiders," who made it their business to rob the sick, and those who were unable to defend themselves of their clothing and rations, and in many instances pursuing a most brutal course towards them, depriving them of the scanty allowances they possessed. Whenever any complaint of this character was brought to the notice of Col. SANDERSON, immediate steps were taken by him to punish the offenders, and the punishment inflicted was no more than they deserved, and in some cases not sufficient. We do not know of his insulting, abusing, or punishing an enlisted man who approached him properly or respectfully.

JOSEPH JEWELL, Co. F.
WM. G. JONES, (his † mark), Co. D.
PETER T. BEAN, Co. D.

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FROM C. C. FULTON, ESQ.,

(*Publisher of the Baltimore American.*)

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BALTIMORE, May 29th, 1865.

Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON:

*Dear Sir:*—I cut the annexed letter from the file of the *Baltimore American* of date March 4th, 1864. It is the only letter I find from Mr. Cowardin in which your name is mentioned. Mr. Cowardin, although a rank rebel, responded promptly to my appeal in behalf of humanity to assist in the prompt delivery of the supplies and money I sent to our prisoners. I received a dozen or more similar letters from him in 1863-4, and I always heard from our returning prisoners that he was very kind and attentive to them. He was an old acquaintance, and I know possessed an influence at Richmond that could not be disregarded.

Respectfully yours,
[Signed] C. C. FULTON.

*Extract.*]

RICHMOND, February 24th, 1864.

Major JOHN E. MULFORD:

*Fortress Monroe.*

* * * * * * * * * *

The sum $664.20 (less $20 counterfeit,) I have placed in the hands of Lt.-Col. SANDERSON, of 1st Corps Federal Army, for distribution, and enclose his receipt. The Colonel has at this time a large amount of money, which our authorities have directed him, in conjunction with Capt. Selph, of the Confed-

erate Army to invest in such articles as they think best, and distribute among the prisoners. Colonel SANDERSON has exhibited a great deal of energy as well as discretion as the chief of a board of Federal officers, who have been employed in distributing clothing and other things sent through the lines for the prisoners. He has moreover won the respect and confidence of all with whom he has come in contact by his frankness and suavity. I could devise no plan for distributing the money sent me that would be at all comparable for its success with that of confiding it to him, to go along with his large aggregate, and to be distributed with his efficient means, and under his experience and systematic plan.

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Very respectfully, Yours obed't serv't.

J. A. COWARDIN.

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FROM J. A. COWARDIN, ESQ.

(*Editor of the Richmond Dispatch.*)

RICHMOND, Va., July 16th, 1865.

Understanding that Col. JAMES M. SANDERSON has been charged with "disloyalty" to the Federal Government and "cruelty to the enlisted (Union) men on Belle Island," &c., I take pleasure in bearing testimony as far as I can, to the injustice of these charges. Having myself, at different times, in the Winter and Spring of 1864, a large amount of things for distribution among the prisoners on that Island, and being compelled to visit "Libby" frequently for the purpose of discharging similar commissions, I very often met with Col. SANDERSON, who was selected, as I understood, by his fellow-prisoners as principal of a board, whose organization was elicited by the Confederate authorities, for the purpose of distributing clothing and subsistence sent through the lines by their own Government and people for their comfort and sustenance. For very many days and for hours together each day I saw Col. S. engaged in this duty, and was struck with the system and order with which the whole matter was done. The whole business of enrolling the men, and giving them in order, what each was entitled to, was performed in a manner which precluded, as far as I could see or imagine any unfairness; while the department of Col. S. and the officers who aided him, was universally kind and considerate towards the men: I could not see how it could be more so; while the labor of distribution was performed with great expedition, often under circumstances of great discomfort to the Colonel and his assistants at an inclement season.

I was often brought in company with the Colonel, conversed with him, and heard him converse with others, but never heard him utter a sentiment disloyal to his own Government, nor make at any time any concessions from his position and fealty as an officer in the Federal Army. He was uniformly courteous and polite, and was respected by our soldiers and citizens, but I never heard one utter a suspicion of his loyalty to his own Government. Treachery to that or his fellow soldier would be utterly irreconcilable with his deportment as far as I observed it.

J. A. COWARDIN.

## STATEMENT OF Lt. BOSSIEUX, C. S. A.

Richmond, July 3, 1865.

I, Virginius Bossieux, late a Lieutenant in the Confederate army, do hereby depose and swear, that I was Commandant of the Prisoners' Camp on Belle Island, from June, 1863, to July, 1864, and subsequently. I know Brig.-Gen. Neal Dow. He was sent over to the Island to distribute the clothing sent by the U. S. Government to the enlisted men there prisoners of War. His manner of doing business was so unsystematic and loose that I was forced to ask that he might be relieved and others appointed in his place, which was done. The first day Gen. Dow made his appearance on the Island, he made a speech to them, which raised their expectations so high that, on finding themselves disappointed, they cursed him in the most infamous manner; and when I remarked to him that I had some very bad men there, he replied, "Yes, they are the rakings and scrapings of Europe." The officers who succeeded Gen. Dow were Col. Cesnola, Lt. Col. Boyd, and Lt. Col. Von Schrader, who went to work in a systematic and organized manner; their manner of doing business gave very general satisfaction. Col. Cesnola, however, for reasons, was relieved, and Lt. Col. J. M. Sanderson sent in his place. It was my business to see the members of the Commission whenever they came upon the Island. I saw Col. S. on every occasion that he visited the Camp, and was cognizant of all his movements—it being impossible for him to go or come or circulate beyond a very limited space without my permission. I have constantly witnessed his manner towards the enlisted men whilst engaged in issuing clothing; he was not in the habit of addressing them with oaths, curses, or bitter revilings. On the contrary, he was always kind and considerate, acting, however, with firmness and dignity. Both Cols. Cesnola and Cols. Von Schrader were in the habit of using strong language to the men—much stronger than Col. Sanderson; believing, doubtless, that such a course was necessary to enforce proper discipline. The prisoners were very disrespectful and insubordinate at first, and Col. S. was forced, owing to their insulting manner, to adopt such measures as were permitted him to suppress their insolence. I have never known him to punish a personal insult other than by reproof. He did punish two men for drawing clothing from him and selling it immediately to the guard. This offence was considered the cause of much difficulty; and, at his request, I caused some of the guard caught in the act of buying clothing from the prisoners to be arrested and court-martialed.

Among the prisoners were a number of men of the most depraved and wicked character—robbing, ill-treating, and murdering their comrades for the sake of plunder. To suppress this gang was a constant study with Col. S., and at his suggestion I organized a patrol among the prisoners themselves, which had the desired effect. Some of these men were caught in the very act of despoiling their comrades; and, at Col. Sanderson's request, I ordered them to be bucked. Had they been turned over to the prisoners themselves, they would have fared much worse. Col. S. was uniformly courteous and gentlemanly to every person connected with the camp; and, being respected by all, was more successful in his efforts to relieve the prisoners than any other Federal officer I had any knowledge of. In fact, he never made any suggestion to me that I did

not cheerfully grant and accede to, if in my power to grant. I was personally cognizant of many acts of kindness and of disinterested friendship on the part of Col. S. to the men by advancing them money, preventing them from sacrificing valuable property, and disposing to the best advantage the proceeds of their industry and handiwork. There were no other officers on the Island but the officers of the guard and myself. I certainly never reproved Col. S. for his treatment to the men, as I considered his conduct to them officer-like and gentlemanly ; and I do not believe any other officer pretending to any knowledge of discipline or subordination, would have done so. I never saw or heard of his making sport of the Federal prisoners for the amusement of Confederate officers. On the contrary, I have heard him address strong sympathy and do everything in his power to alleviate their miseries. He has reproved them for filthiness, carelessness, or bad conduct to each other ; and, after the first few days of his visiting the Island, has compelled them to pay him the respect due to his rank and position ; but I never knew him to maltreat or abuse them for trivial offences or punish them for neglecting to salute him, nor did I ever know or hear of his bucking, gagging, or kicking them for any cause excepting those mentioned. In fact, he had not the right to punish any one without my consent ; nor do I think he ever did so without first stating the case to me and obtaining permission. I have often thought and frequently said to him that he submitted to the insolence of some of the enlisted men with more patience than they deserved. I never heard of his refusing shoes to barefooted men, nor of any one having his feet frozen in consequence of such refusal, nor do I believe it. When the men approached him properly and respectfully, I have never known him to refuse them, if in his power to oblige them. Many attempts were made by the worst portion of them to deceive Col. S., and obtain from him articles they had already been furnished with or were not entitled to. A very common excuse was that they had been robbed by their companions of their coats and blankets, and wanted Col. S. to replace them. This I have known him to do in some cases, but generally he refused until every other man was served at least once. I never knew or heard of his giving U. S. clothing to any person connected with the Confederate service. On the contrary, I have known of his refusing such clothing to enlisted men suspected by him of having taken the oath of allegiance to the Confederate Government.

Political or sectional discussions were as a rule forbidden at my table : the Federal officers, visiting the Island, were in a measure my guests, and their duties compelled them to be there at the time I generally took my dinner. Seats were provided for them, and they were invariably invited to partake, and out of respect to them, all subjects of a disagreeable nature were prohibited. On one or two occasions such a discussion did arise, but Col. S. in each instance defended the cause of his Government and section respectfully but firmly.

Col. S., took great pains to make himself acquainted with the wants and necessities of the men, and anxious to learn the truth of the many tales told of their treatment. He constantly visited the kitchen of the camp, instructing and advising the cooks, and frequently inspected the grave-yard where all the men dying on the Island were buried, counting the graves, and making his memorandum at every visit. He was always accompanied by one or more Federal

officers, fellow-prisoners, to whom every privilege of conversing with the men freely and unreservedly, was granted. By every one I ever heard speak of Col. SANDERSON, he was regarded as a courteous gentleman, and as far as I could judge was as ready to accord to every one due respect, as he was prompt to demand it from them.

[Signed] VIRGINIUS BOSSIEUX.

*State of Virginia, City of Richmond, to wit:*

This day personally appeared before me Virginius Bossieux, and made oath, that the statement hereunto annexed is true.

Given under my hand, this 5th July, 1865.

WM. TAYLOR, *J. P.*

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## STATEMENT OF CAPT. C. McRAE SELPH.

My name is Colin McRae Selph, I was a Captain, Ass't.-Adj't. General in the late Confederate States Army. I was assigned to duty with Gen. Winder in the Winter of '63 and '64, and, by him, placed in charge of the supplies which were sent from the United States to the prisoners of War in Richmond, and other cities of the Confederacy.

I met Lt.-Col. J. M. SANDERSON, who was a prisoner of War in Libby Prison. He was at the time of my first meeting with him, engaged in the distribution of clothing, &c., to the prisoners on Belle Isle.

In organizing a board of Federal officers, which was to assist me in the proper distribution of the supplies, I retained all of those who had been acting previous to my assignment to duty, adding Lt. Col. Archer, of Ky., because of his kindness towards some of my friends in Vicksburg. The members of this Board, among whom was Lt. Col. SANDERSON, were brought from Libby Prison to my office every morning, where a portion remained to distribute the clothing, etc., to the prisoners, and the other portion went to Belle Isle for the same purpose. Col. S. took upon himself the more arduous duty of attending to the wants of the prisoners on Belle Isle. The Board generally remained out of Libby Prison until 6 or 7 o'clock, P. M., or they could return to the Prison and leave it at any time during the day upon expressing a wish to do so.

Col. SANDERSON often asked and obtained permission for several of his fellow-prisoners to accompany him to Belle Isle, thus enabling many to enjoy the fresh air, exercise and a change of association. His general character as a courteous gentleman, and his freedom from any selfish spirit, rendered Col. S., respected by all the officers of the Libby Prison. Yet he was looked upon as a staunch loyal man, and expressed his opinions when called upon by the language of others, freely and boldly. Upon one occasion, in my office, I was forced to order the Lieutenant of the Guard to cease conversation with Col. S., because the conversation was not such as should be held between a prisoner of War and an officer of the guard. Col. S., was then defending with great force the cause of the Union, and much to the disadvantage of the Lieutenant who was becoming personal in his remarks.

I never heard it stated among the Confederate authorities that Col. S., had given any information or intimation of a proposed attempt at escape of his fellow-prisoners. If it had been so, I would have known it. On the contrary *I knew* it was *not* Col. SANDERSON; but another prisoner who gave all the information that was necessary, especially in the case of a Major (White, I believe,) who escaped by going with the Surgeons, but was brought back from City Point. Col. S. frequently expressed to me his sentiments, and I believe that he reposed the fullest confidence in me. He was, as a gentleman, opposed to the violent voluntary expression of political opinions in his intercourse with the Confederate officers, but I have seen him frequently drawn out, and have induced him to speak myself, but in all his conversations he firmly and ably defended his actions and the cause of his Government. I have never heard him express any but the most loyal sentiments, and have thought, as did other Confederate officers, that he was the truest Union man that we had met. In all of his meetings with several of his old friends Col. S. expressed his firm Union sentiments, and opposition to the South and Secession.

It would have been impossible for Col. S. to have had any communication with any of the principal officers of the Confederate Government, without my knowledge, and I am certain that he had no intimacy with any of them, and that individually he received no favors from them; I am personally cognizant of the fact, that permission was refused him to accept the hospitalities which were tendered to him by an old friend on Christmas Day, 1863.

I was severely reprimanded by Gen. Winder for my course towards Col. S. and the other members of the Board with whom I held some feelings of esteem and friendship; a feeling which is not impossible for even enemies to entertain. Col. SANDERSON did not receive any favors or privileges other than those which were incident to his official position or which were accorded to the other members of the Board, indeed Col. S. did not receive as many as the other members of the Board, because he was at Belle Isle during most of the time. I do not know that Col. S. ever applied for or received any particular personal favors from others, from myself he never asked and never accepted any, but he made many applications in favor of his companions, and frequently obtained special privileges for his fellow-prisoners from myself, such as the delivery of private boxes, &c., when the distribution was suspended by order of Gen. Winder, and furnishing those who received none from home, with provisions from the confiscated goods.

The distribution of clothing and other supplies which were sent by the U. S. and the Sanitary and other Commissions, was under my control, and Col. S. could not have appropriated or disposed of any of them without my consent or the knowledge of the detectives of Gen. Winder. Gen. Winder, no matter how censurable he may have been in other respects, was too honest to have permitted anything of the kind, and would certainly have known it.

I remember that it was owing entirely to Col. SANDERSON'S representations that the boxes of Gen'l Neal Dow were delivered at all, and his representations and refusal to take his own boxes until their boxes were delivered, induced me to deliver the boxes of Gen'l Scammon, Col. Streight and Col. Cesnola. Col. S. on two occasions requested and obtained the delivery of boxes for Dow and

Streight, when the delivery of boxes was suspended by order of Gen. Winder I, in those cases, took the responsibility.

I am confident that no member of the Board sought or obtained as many special favors for his fellow prisoners as did Col. Sanderson, or that they did more to ameliorate their condition. Yet I must express my esteem for every member—they conducted themselves with great courtesy, and gave me great assistance.

I certify on honor that the above statement is true.

C. McRAE SELPH,
*Capt. & A. A. G., late C. S. A.*

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Brooklyn, 20th March, 1865.

Brig. Gen'l J. C. Caldwell,
*Pres't Military Commission.*

General: I have the honor to forward you two original letters written by me, whilst in Libby prison, to my family in New-York.

My object in placing before you these letters is to show:

1st. The mental difficulties and private griefs I was laboring under at the very moment I was charged with having disclosed our plan of escape.

2d. To prove where I drew all the luxuries and conveniences of my mess which have been charged against me, by my enemies, as coming from rebel sources.

3d. To establish the date of my visit to the hospital, about which there appears to be some discrepancy between Capt. Fentress, and Col. Fisher. This is of importance to show that Neal Dow, who arrived, according to his own statement at Portland, from Mobile about the latter part of October, could not have been present at an incident occuring not later than the 21st. My own impression is that he did not reach Libby until the 28th or 29th of October.

4th. To prove that in the midst of my personal griefs and discomforts, I was still resigned to the action of my Government, and did not fear to say so, although I knew that every letter was subject to the scrutiny of the Confederates.

The friend referred to as having sent me some dainties was a brother hotel-keeper, who I had known in Baltimore. This was the *only* instance of such kindness to me during my whole stay.

Very respectfully, &c.,
JAMES M. SANDERSON.

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## COPY OF A LETTER FROM LIBBY.

Libby, October 6th, 1863.

Yesterday the letters per last "flag of truce" were delivered, but none from my darling child, and no news of her dear mother. When the last name is read and your own is unheard, there comes over the heart a chilly coldness, hard to

describe, but bitter to feel; and when you look around and see the triumphant and glad smile of the fortunate, one seems inclined to do or say something very malicious, or very sentimental. The only thing that tempers my thoughts just now, however, is the hope that the worst has not, as yet, befallen me, and that I can still think of your darling mother as being with and near you. And yet the state in which you describe her is heartrending and painful, bearing with it the consciousness that your loss is her gain. May God give her strength to bear bravely her burden. I see no prospects of an exchange this winter, and, in fact, it has been intimated to us to provide ourselves as soon as possible with every needed requirement for shielding us from the rigors of the coming season. I have written, some time ago, for some necessaries, but fear the letter has miscarried. I require immediately, warm underclothing, undershirts, drawers, stockings, warm mitts; fur-lined slippers with stout soles, and if there be any warm, thick *coat* among my old clothes, send it along. My fur-cap is in Washington, if not put it in the box; also an old-fashioned magnifying or "burning glass," the German are the cheapest, about 2 or 2½ inches in diameter; a pint of alchohol, with an ounce of camphor dissolved in it; a cake of camphor ice; a very small pair of dividers or compasses; another pair of linnen drawers—they are good to sleep in—and if there be any silk undershirts or drawers among my stock send them along. By all means send me a canvass hammock, complete with slings and heavy iron hooks. Send me monthly, with bill, the articles enumerated on the other side. If Leonard wants money to purchase anything for me, I have requested him to draw on your husband. Give him my love and tell him to honor the drafts. With many kisses to your dear mamma, if she still lives, and for yourself, I am as ever,

Your dearest papa,

JAMES M. SANDERSON.

Mrs. J. A. Hewlett,

82 *Wall Street, New-York.*

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5 lbs. Coffee, ground; 10 lbs. White Sugar; 10 lbs. Brown Sugar; 5 lbs American Cheese; 10 lbs. Butter in tin cans; ½ doz. Currant Jelley in tumblers; 1 doz. cans Condensed Milk; 1 doz. cans assorted Meats; 1 doz. cans assorted Vegetables; 1 bottle Worcestershire Sauce; 1 bottle English Mustard; 1 jar of Preserves; ½ doz. Lemons; 1 quire Letter Paper and Envelopes; ½ doz. Essences for Cooking; 6 doz. box. Parafine Candles and Matches; ½ doz. best Syrup or Maple Molasses; Bed Bug Killer; 3 Soup Plates, 1 dinner Plate, Ironstone or China; 2 Table Cloths, 4 ft. square.

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"Libby," 14 Oct., 1863.

*My Dear Children:*

Your joint note of Sept. 27 and Oct. 1, reached me last week. I am greatly delighted to know my letter reached your dear mamma in time. My pain at hearing of your marriage was of course due to my forbodings for her health, for had she been well, and such an incident occur, of course, I should have

known that some proper reason influenced it. I dont remember of her ever being wrong in an event of such magnitude. A quarter of a century has elapsed since *our* wedding day, and a most momentous era it has been not only for us, but for the world at large. Rumors are constantly reaching us as to exchanges, and I have been constantly buoyed up with the hopes of release in time to see her before her release from this earth and its pain, but I have now ceased to hope, and await with quiet resignation the decision of my Government quite satisfied to remain, if, by so doing, I fill the measure of my duty. The authorities here have lately greatly ameliorated our condition and improved our accomodations, especially the hospital department. To-day I have been the recipient of some dainties from an old friend of years gone by, and am anxious to return it, and know of nothing better than a couple of pounds of tea, which costs here something fabulous. Have it put in the first box. I began to fear my letters were destroyed, but your announcement of the receipt of those of 7 and 8th Sept., reassure me, and I am anxiously awaiting the arrival of the box, having just reached the end of my coffee, sugar, milk and everything in fact, but my tea. For three days past I have been quite ill, but am now quite recovered. Don't forget the hammock, subjoined is a list of a few additional articles I require. With my deepest love, and constant prayers, as ever,

Your Father,

J. M. SANDERSON.

1 Bottle Velpeau's remedy for rheumatism; 1 Paper Tacks; 1 Small Hammer or Hatchet; 2 Camel's Hair Brushes; 5 lb. *Italian* Macaroni; Paper of Court-Plaster; A small Spring Balance; Camphor Ice.

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October 20, in pencil.

I have just recovered from another severe cold, which sent me to the hospital, whence I have just returned. I am anxiously awaiting a letter or a box, especially the hammock. J. M. S.

Send me some *Musk*, let it be strong,—lice dont like it.

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October 23.

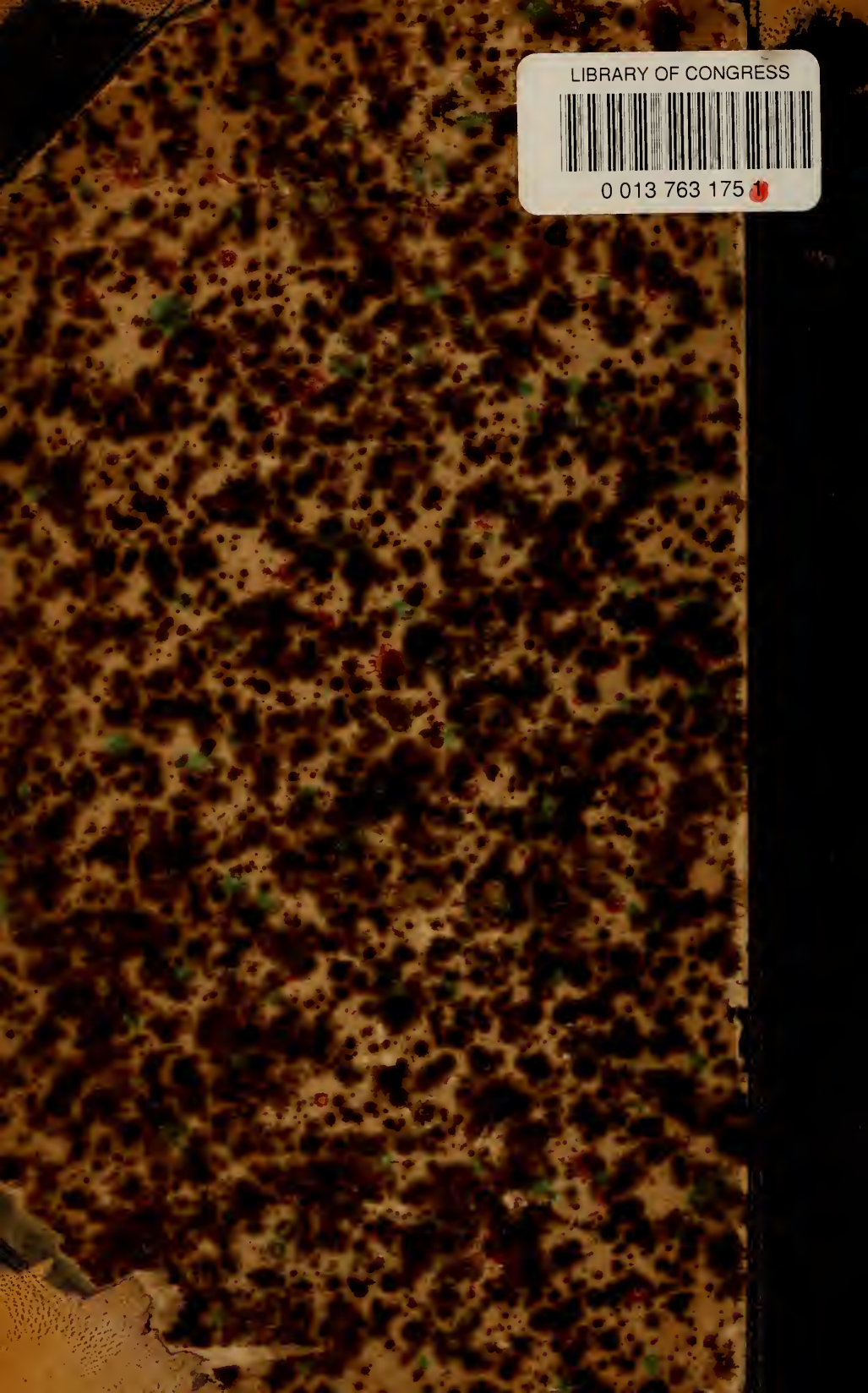
Your letters of Oct. 6 and 9, just received, but no box as yet greatly to my discomfort. Will write again shortly. J. M. S.

# OFFICERS ADDRESSED,

## FROM WHOM NO REPLY HAS BEEN RECEIVED.

Lt. Col. S. M. Archer, 17th Iowa—2 letters.
Col. W. B. McCreery, 21st Michigan—2 letters.
Lt. Col. H. B. Hunter, 123d Ohio—declines answering.
Lt. Col. J. F. Boyd, Q. M. Army of the Ohio—2 letters.
Lt. Col. A. Von Schrader, A. I. G., 14th Army Corp—declines answering.
Lt. Col. A. F. Von Mitzel, 74th Pennsylvania –1 letter.
Capt. F. E. Wentworth, C. S.—reply miscarried.
Lt. W. C. Robinson, 34th Illinois—declines answering.
Brig. Gen. E. P. Scammon—1 letter.
Lt. Col. E. L. Hays, 100th Ohio—1 letter.
Lt. W. F. Randolph, 5th United States Artillery—3 letters.
Col. W. F. Wilson, 123d Ohio—1 letter.
Lt. Col. J. P. Spofford, 97th New-York—3 letters.
Capt. Thomas Huggins, 59th New-York—3 letters.
Lt. Col. A. P. Henry, 15th Kentucky—1 letter.
Lt. Col. W. B. Neeper, 57th Pennsylvania—3 letters.
Major S. McIrvin, 2d New-York Cavalry—1 letter.
Col. C. H. Carlton, 89th Ohio—1 letter.
Capt. J. H. Whelan, Ass't Adj't Gen'l,—2 letters.
Major W. D. Morton, 14th New-York Cavalry—reply miscarried.
Capt. Thomas Cummings, 19th U. S. Inf.—2 letters
Capt. W. H. Douglas, C. S.—2 letters.
Major E. M. Pope, Ass't Insp. Gen'l—3 letters.
Capt. Fred. Barton—2 letters.
Lieut. Ira Tyler, 5th Maryland—1 letter.
Lieut. John Fgan—1 letter.
Lieut. Butler Coles, 2d N. Y. Cav.—1 letter.
Isaac Johnson, Eng., U. S. Navy—1 letter.
Lieut. A. W. Sprague, 24th Michigan—1 letter.
Capt. F. Memmert, 5th Maryland—2 letters.
Major Josiah Hall, 1st Vermont Cav.—1 letter.
Capt. Czsbad, Aid-de-Camp—1 letter.
Lt. Col. J. N. Walker, 73d Indiana—1 letter.
Lieut. M. Kupp, 167th Pennsylvania—1 letter.
Capt. W. M. Cockrum, 42d Indiana—1 letter.
Adj't M. R. Small, 6th Maryland—1 letter.
Lieut. S. S. Holbrook, 15th U. S. Inf.—1 letter.
Capt. John Daly, 104th New-York—1 letter.

John Y. Goodrich, 13th Mass.—4 letters.
Capt. J. C. Meagher, 40th Ohio—1 letter.
Capt. J. A. Johnson, 11th Kentucky—1 letter.
Capt. Thomas Reed, 1st. Virginia Inf.—2 letters.
Capt. Horace Noble, 9th Maryland—1 letter.
Chaplain O. Taylor, Pontiac, Michigan—1 letter.
Lt. Wm. Blanchard, 2d U. S. Cavalry—1 letter.
Rev. H. W. Bellows, President Sanitary Commission—declines answering
Lt. C. G. A. Peterson, 1st Rhode Island Cavalry—declines answering.
Capt. W. M. Beeman, 1st Vermont Cavalry—1 letter.
Chaplain McCabe, Christain Commission—1 letter.
Lt. Geo. A. Deering, 16th Maine—1 letter.
Private W. W. Sprague, 37 Essex St., Boston—1 letter.
Lt. H. S. Platt. 5th Maryland—1 letter.
Lt. Col. G. Von Helmrick, 21st Missouri Cavalry—1 letter.
Major Beers,—1 letter.
Col. G. C. Joslin, 15th Massachusetts—1 letter.
Lt. Gorgas, 90th Pennsylvania—1 letter.
Lt. S. G. Davis, 1st Massachusetts Cavalry—2 letters.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